



CELEBRITY GAMERS

Henry Hill plays GTA; Eminem's new game; and Angelica Bridges interviewed! (Who? Who cares?)

RENTING GAMES?

We help you save money and play more

HULK, T3, MATRIX...

Hollywood is getting involved with your videogames. Is this a good thing or a bad thing?

ELECTRONIC GAMING

The #1 Videogame Magazine MONTHLY

Hot Stuff!

TOP 20 GAMES OF THE SUMMER

Don't stay indoors without 'em!

Special Report

PLAYSTATION 3, XBOX 2, GAMECUBE 2...

What the big three have planned for you

Whip It Good!

CASTLEVANIA

RISES ON PS2

You've waited an eternity for it. We've got the exclusive screens and info.

ENTER TO WIN COOL MATRIX PRIZES!
Collect magazines and more by 8/1!



249+ GAMES INSIDE!



SONIC HEROES COUNTER-STRIKE
Legacy of Kain: Dalianna • SSX 3 • Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: The Manhattan Project • Fable
Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic • Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 3 • Advance Wars 2 • Vectorman
Arc the Lad: Twilight of the Spirits • Wario World • Advance Wars 2 • Vectorman
Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles • Star Wars Jedi Knight: Jedi Academy • XIII • B.C.

July 2005 \$4.99 U.S.



WWW.ELGMAG.COM

Display Until July 31



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.

Dodgeball

Just one of seven games you can play online with *My Street*.

My Street™ is overrun with punks. Tearing up backyards with RC race cars. Dominating the beach with games of volleyball. And you've already seen what they do with dodgeballs. Create your own character and beat these bullies at their own game. Forget all about sportsmanship, and *My Street* could be all yours.





Madden
NFL
STREET

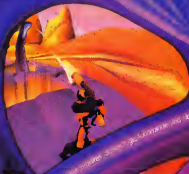


PlayStation 2



www.us.playstation.com

Madden NFL Street 2 is a trademark and registered trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "Play in Your World" - Play in Ours is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Madden NFL Street 2 is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. ©2003 Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Designed and developed by Madden. The "Online" icon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All other logos are trademarks of their respective owners. Internet connectivity required for PlayStation 2 online play.



Experience the most intense combat performance and skills you've

A completely original and unique solo experience



Introducing the first of a new kind of solo experience



Get the demo at www.demosrb.com. While supplies last.

"After Echo has established itself as an innovative and intriguing action game that's both unique in its approach to combat and unusual in its artistic approach to landscapes and character design."

—IGN.com



Visit www.srb.org
or call 1-800-771-3772
for more info

PlayStation 2



© 2003 THQ Inc. All Rights Reserved. THQ and the THQ logo are the trademarks of THQ Inc. in the U.S., Canada and the U.K. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

In the future, the most powerful substance ever created can control time and physics. Only a chosen few can control it.
But only one can **save us** from it.



Melee Mode

One of 3 forms you can instantly morph into. When enemies are breathing down your neck, use melee to:

- Slash and hack with your sword
- Stun your enemies into submission
- Show-off your agility with combos, double-jumps, juggles and more.

alter echo

It's an Altered World.

Learn to Adapt.

THQ

www.thq.com



Do something. Fight for money, power and respect in the underground. The battle begins at defjamvendetta.com.



DEEP IN CUBA, THE GHOSTS



WE ARE
THE NATION'S CHOSEN FEW.
WE ARE SWIFT, SILENT, AND INVISIBLE.
WE WILL NEVER SURRENDER.
WE FIGHT, SO THAT PEACE MAY REIGN.
WE ARE THE GHOSTS.



SQUAD-BASED BATTLEFIELD COMBAT

With a new single-player campaign, 12 new multiplayer maps, and downloadable missions, the TOTAL BATTLEFIELD EXPERIENCE just got a whole lot steamier. In the wake of Castro's death, the Ghosts battle a drug-funded warlord threatening Cuba's first free elections in decades. It's up to you and your team to take the fight to the enemy in the streets, beaches and jungles of Cuba. Take on rebels, irregulars and mercenary troops to face the Ghosts' greatest challenge yet.



www.ubi.com



©2007 Red Storm Entertainment. All Rights Reserved. Island Thunder, Red Storm, and Red Storm Entertainment are trademarks of Red Storm Entertainment in the U.S. and/or other countries. Red Storm Entertainment, Inc. is a U.S. entertainment company. Don't Leave a Ghost Behind is a trademark of Red Storm, Inc. and/or other countries. Ubi Soft Entertainment is a trademark of the Ubi Soft logo and trademarks of Ubi Soft Entertainment in the U.S. and/or other countries. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Xbox logo and the Xbox Live logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

BATTLE A NEW ENEMY.



Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon: The #1 XBOX™ Online Enabled Game



The original squad-based
battlefield experience.



The new jungle
warfare campaign.

★ Tom Clancy's
**GHOST
RECON**
ISLAND THUNDER™

STREETS ARE FOR WUSSIES

ESRB RATING



Visit www.esrb.org or
call 1-800-771-3772
for Rating Information



PlayStation 2

SEE THE
MOVIE IN
THEATRES NOW!

Who needs pavement when you're behind the wheel of a souped-up MINI Cooper? Tear through subway stations, rip apart golf courses, and plow through storm drains as you pull off the ultimate gold heist.

THE ITALIAN JOB



A high-octane arcade racer based on the blockbuster movie.



Race through L.A. driving 10 different vehicles.



Master 4 modes from death-defying stunt driving to multiplayer madness.



Bonus features including movie footage, interviews, and more!

CLIMAX



EIDOS

ItalianJobGame.com

Trademarks of Eidos Interactive, Inc., "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos GameCubes logo are trademarks of Nintendo. ©2001 Nintendo. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All rights reserved.



ENTER THE MATRIX CONTEST

131 Find five white rabbits hidden throughout this magazine, and you're one step closer to being the owner of a new console.

LETTERS

22 We care about what you have to say, really

PRESS START

The latest news, interviews, features, and gaming tidbits

- 34 **MEET**
Our crystal ball sheds light on the next round of consoles
- 36 **EMERGE**
Will the virtual Slim Shady please stand up?
- 38 **GRUDGE MATCH**
The Nintendo geek vs. Splinter Cell's stealth star
- 40 **INTENDO**
The big N reveals its fall lineup
- 42 **INSTANT EXPERT**
Becomes an anime guru overnight
- 44 **AFTERTHOUGHTS**
We ask why you can't create a nudist colony in *The Sims*
- 46 **THE MOVIE GAME RELOADED**
A look at Hollywood-inspired games that hopefully won't suck
- 50a **EDM INTERNATIONAL**
The *PlayStation 2* isn't afraid of its ghosts
- 50b **MENTAL SERVICES**
Be lazy and still play the latest games for cheap
- 51 **CELEBRITY INTERVIEW**
Former *Playboy* model Angelica Bridges dips games. Schwing!
- 52 **SEIZE THE GAME**
Old-school handhelds make a comeback
- 54 **EVERQUEST ONLINE ADVENTURES**
How *Sony* isn't giving up on the console version of *EverQuest*
- 56 **HENRY HILL**
A reformist gangster critiques games that he may have helped inspire
- 58 **DOWNLOAD**
New Mac/iMac/cable mode
- 58 **PC GAMING UPDATE**
Half-Life 2—ruff said
- 58 **THE RUMOR MILL**
Omarie hears of another "Halo killer"
- 62 **THE HOT 5**
A GameCube racer has cracked into your meat-wheeler list
- 64 **COMING SOON**
What's gonna keep you broke for the next two months

PREVIEWS

With so many games to talk about, we had to split them up into two separate stories

- 68 **TOP 20 SUMMER GAMES**
Go ahead and take a look at the hot games which leave the *EGM* staff members shoving their beach towels and surfboards
- 78 **ON THE HORIZON**
Read up on the games that will be grabbing your attention after the summer months, which include *Sanic Heroes*, *Counter-Strike*, *Legacy of Kain: Defiance*, *SSX 3*, *F-Zero GX*, *Ps2*, *Xbox*, and more



75

STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC II



76

STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC



82



86

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

REVIEW CREW

The only mag that offers three reviews for each game

- 105 Return to Castle Wolfenstein: Tides of War
- 106 Arc the Lad: Twilight of the Spirits
- 106 MetalGP 2
- 108 Unlimited Saga
- 108 Wakeboarding Unleashed featuring Shaun Murray
- 110 Robocop
- 110 Tike Slater
- 112 Chase Legion
- 112 Ultimate Muscle: Legends vs. New Generation
- 114 War3 World
- 118 Phantasy Star Online Episode I & II
- 118 Resident Evil Dead Aim
- 117 Sonic Pinball Party
- 118 Donkey Kong Country
- 118 Evil Dead: A Fistful of Boomstick
- 120 X2: Wolverine's Revenge
- 121 Ban out 2: Point of Impact
- 122 Advance Wars 2: Black Hole Rising
- 122 Bloody Rear Extreme
- 123 Dragon Ball Z: Legacy of Goku II



105

RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN: TIDES OF WAR

13

13 / 222



114



116

RESIDENT EVIL DEAD AIM

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Game hints, tips, and cheats

- 126 Return to Castle Wolfenstein: Tides of War
- 126 NBA Street Vol. 2
- 126 Yu-Gi-Oh! Worldwide Edition

GAME OVER

Crud, crosswords, and comics

- 130 REST OF THE CRAP
Sensibly pulls no punches with these strikers
- 131 ENTER THE MATRIX CONTEST/CROSSWORD
- 134 HSU & CHAN

CELEBRITY INTERVIEW
Angelica Bridges. She's hot and into playing with your controller.

51

THE MOVIE GAME RELOADED
Hollywood attempts to make games better for a change

46



34

NEXT
Our predictions on what is hoped from the *PlayStation 2*, *Xbox 2*, and *GameCube 2*

92

COVER STORY:

CASTLEVANIA: LAMENT OF INNOCENCE

We're the first to open the casket on the next *Castlevania*—and guess what—it's not coming to the Game Boy Advance. Check out our exclusive hands-on report of *Lament of Innocence* for the PlayStation 2.

editorial



It's a weekly routine: I sit in front of my computer right as deadlines, speeding both the time wondering what the heck I should be writing for my editorial, speeding the other half cursing whoever's responsible for making editorials a standard practice for magazines, cause I hate writing them.

Managing Editor Jaseel Tsoo just fessed me this look that clearly told me I had better get this editorial done or else...so I better get back to work. "Well," I tell Jaseel, smiling, "I'm halfway done, and I haven't even said anything worth a damn yet!" His slick eye doesn't lower its alert level, so back to scratching my head I go.

Maybe this is a good thing, having no bigger issues to discuss. No violence-to-gaming controversies (ouch or weed), no peddles to any console's handling to an early grave, so we're bringing our attention to our games...as nothing. So this is what it's like to think about nothing but games, nothing but fun? I can use this space to nerd-out about how great *Soul Calibur II* is (are you playing the import version like we are?), or how addicting *Phantasy Star Online* continues to be (on the Xbox, I'm only a level 33 freeright now...how about you?). Or, I can go on about what a sick run of *Castlevania* we've gotten so far as the Game Boy Advance (three games, three gold awards and Game of the Month honors from our Review Crew)...and now we're getting a PS2 version at last! But alas, I'm out of space. With any luck, editorializing on the fun, simpler aspects of videogaming will become a new weekly routine.

—Dan "Shov" Riss, Editor-in-Chief



staff

exactly 2,387 pounds of gaming expertise

7 EPP DIVISIONS

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

Editor: **Chad Bon-Ton** *“The Executive Editor Mike Beuchamp Managing Editor Jennifer Tico Assistant Editors: Scott Branson, Matt Gruber, Jason Chan, ‘DJ’ Johnson, John ‘Jaxx’ Skellie, Richard Perisano*
Assistant Editor: **David Beckson**
Assistant Editor: **John Stanard**
Assistant Editor: **John Stanard**

CONTRIBUTORS
 Chris Bahr, John Brownie, Thomas Brudahl, Robert Colberg, Chris Elliott, Charles Engel, Jon Haring, Louise Sanchez, Jarrett Smith, Geoff Knopfler, Bob Ruchins, Gene Lee, Greg Strachan, Andrew Pflaum, Ann Perle, Norm Scott, Sandra Scott, Tom Sanders, Gary Siskind, Scott S. Stone, Sebastian, Matt Gumpertz, Jarrod Ward, Steve Ward

ADVERTISING
 Art Director: **Wendee Muehlke**
 Associate Art Director: **Julian Koenig**
DESIGNERS
 Dan Baker, John Brownie, Thomas Brudahl, Robert Colberg, Chris Elliott, Charles Engel, Jon Haring, Louise Sanchez, Jarrett Smith, Geoff Knopfler, Bob Ruchins, Gene Lee, Greg Strachan, Andrew Pflaum, Ann Perle, Norm Scott, Sandra Scott, Tom Sanders, Gary Siskind, Scott S. Stone, Sebastian, Matt Gumpertz, Jarrod Ward, Steve Ward

REPRODUCTION
 Bill Peckham, Bruce Riegler, Greg Fink, Matt Meyer, Paul Meloy, Maura Michael, Nicole Smith, Bob Gorman
 Art Production Manager: **Nicholas Velopou**
MANAGEMENT
 General Manager: **Scott Branson**
 Associate General Manager: **John Stanard**
 Director: **Bill Peckham**
 Editor: **Chad Bon-Ton**
 Assistant Editor: **John Stanard**
 Assistant Editor: **John Stanard**

SALES AND MARKETING
 Group Publisher: **Lee Shroyer**
 415-547-4610, fax: 415-547-8777
 National Advertising: **John Stanard**
 415-547-4610, fax: 415-547-8777
REPRINTS
 National: **John Stanard**
 415-547-4610, fax: 415-547-8777
INTERNATIONAL
 National: **John Stanard**
 415-547-4610, fax: 415-547-8777

the review crew



DAN 'DAZE' HSU
Editor-in-Chief
 • Can the human brain survive on two hours of sleep a day? That is trying to beat with his brain his friends *Advanced Wars 2* and *PlayStation 2* Online. We would advise under his cortex to order her to go. *New Play!ng: 400, PS2, Soul Collector 3* • *Five Games:* everything



MARK MACDONALD
Executive Editor
 • After disappointing for three days, Mark finally stumbled back into the office, hysterical and ranting of *PlayStation 2* Online. We would advise under his cortex to order her to go. *New Play!ng: 400, PS2, Soul Collector 3* • *Five Games:* Action, Adventure, RPG



JENNIFER TSAO
Managing Editor
 • You may think a California girl like Jennifer will be eating nothing but during these sunny summer months, but alas, her job at EGM forces her to play endless games at night. *New Play!ng: 400, PS2* • *Five Games:* Action, Sports, Adventure, RPG



CHRISTOPH BORCH
Features Editor
 • Revisiting the new Robopop game made me sad. Not just 'cause it's not, but because its story of a cop killed in action and then reincarnated as a cyborg is a sad tale. *New Play!ng: 400, PS2* • *Five Games:* Action, Sports, Adventure, RPG



CHRIS JOHNSTON
News Editor
 • CJ may look happy and "normal," but right now he's thinking about playing *PlayStation 2* Online. He wants to play PS2. He needs to play PS2. He'll do anything to play PS2. *New Play!ng: 400, PS2, Soul Collector 3* • *Five Games:* PS2, Ep 1, PS2, Ep 2



SHANE HOTTEL/JOHN ODOM
Reviews Editor
 • Having deep into the heart of darkness to find the... *Customized* development team had an idea: "It's not the... *Four weeks—* Set of Boy's in... *New Play!ng: 400, PS2, Soul Collector 3* • *Five Games:* Action, Adventure, RPG, Fighting



JOE POLITE
Reviews Editor
 • In his first month, Joe's jumped out of his seat and had a 257 minutes. That's... *New Play!ng: 400, PS2, Soul Collector 3* • *Five Games:* Action, Adventure, RPG, Fighting



DENNIS LIM
Editor-in-Chief
 • Times like today, they don't appreciate the... *New Play!ng: 400, PS2, Soul Collector 3* • *Five Games:* Action, Adventure, RPG, Fighting



PAUL YRNES
Editor-in-Chief
 • When Paul gets into... *New Play!ng: 400, PS2, Soul Collector 3* • *Five Games:* Action, Adventure, RPG, Fighting



SUZIE INTHORN
Associate Editor
 • Suzie got to play PS2 in... *New Play!ng: 400, PS2, Soul Collector 3* • *Five Games:* Action, Adventure, RPG, Fighting



SHAWN ELLIOTT
Assistant Editor
 • When Shawn got his... *New Play!ng: 400, PS2, Soul Collector 3* • *Five Games:* Action, Adventure, RPG, Fighting



JON DOOKIN
Continuous reviewer
 • From the editor's... *New Play!ng: 400, PS2, Soul Collector 3* • *Five Games:* Action, Adventure, RPG, Fighting



GABE FORD
Continuous reviewer
 • With our and... *New Play!ng: 400, PS2, Soul Collector 3* • *Five Games:* Action, Adventure, RPG, Fighting



JOHN LICCIONE
Continuous reviewer
 • All this S&P... *New Play!ng: 400, PS2, Soul Collector 3* • *Five Games:* Action, Adventure, RPG, Fighting



greg sewall
Continuous reviewer
 • A review tip to... *New Play!ng: 400, PS2, Soul Collector 3* • *Five Games:* Action, Adventure, RPG, Fighting

the contributors

• **BRAD PETERSON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **DAVID PETERSON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **DONALD PETERSON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **CHRIS BARRON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **ANDREW PETERSON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...

• **DAVID PETERSON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **CHRIS BARRON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **ANDREW PETERSON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **DAVID PETERSON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **CHRIS BARRON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...

• **DAVID PETERSON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **CHRIS BARRON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **ANDREW PETERSON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **DAVID PETERSON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **CHRIS BARRON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...

• **DAVID PETERSON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **CHRIS BARRON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **ANDREW PETERSON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **DAVID PETERSON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...
 • **CHRIS BARRON** (*Review*): Peterson has been...

EBGAMES™

electronics boutique®

PlayStation 2



COMING
IN AUGUST

FREE
T-SHIRT*

when you
pre-purchase
Soul Calibur II
with a \$5
deposit

*While supplies last.
See store associate
for details.

Playstation 2	#220071-6 449.99
Xbox	#220032-2 449.99
Nintendo Gamecube	#220015-7 449.99



CALL 1-800-800-5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU OR VISIT US AT WWW.EBGAMES.COM



MATURE
M
ESRB

Blood and Gore
Violence



OVERTHROW HITLER'S EVIL EMPIRE.

You are B.J. Blazkowicz, a US Army Ranger recruited by the OSA and the Allies' top specialist in covert operations, heavy weapons and assassination. Hitler's head of the SS, Heinrich Himmler, is twisting science and the occult into an army capable of annihilating the Allies. The balance of victory is in your hands.

RETURN TO CASTLE Wolfenstein



Traverse vast forests, war-torn cities, Egyptian villages and ancient crypts.



Unleash a brutal arsenal of authentic and experimental weapons.



Engage in an epic, story-driven single-player campaign across over 30 levels.



Face squad-based multiplayer battles against up to 15 others via Xbox Live™ and intense split-screen co-op action.



Complete unique objectives, including stealthy assassinating Nazi officers.



PlayStation 2



NERVE



idsoftware.com



activision.com

Screenshots taken from Xbox™ video game systems and PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system gameplay.

© 2007-2008 by Activision, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Published and Distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. under license. Return to Castle Wolfenstein, Operation: Bannockburn, Return to Castle Wolfenstein, Tales of War, Return to Castle Wolfenstein, the Return to Castle Wolfenstein logo, the id Software logo and the id logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of id Software, Inc. in the United States and/or other countries. Activision is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Licensed for play on the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment systems with the NTRV, LLC designation only. "PlayStation 2" and the "PS2" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Live logo and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The Nerve logo is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

IN SPACE, OR ON LAND,



MATURE
M
ESRB
BLOOD and GORE
VIOLENCE

PlayStation 2



VIVENDI
UNIVERSAL
games

huntthemedown.com

I WILL HUNT THEM DOWN.



MACE GRIFFIN BOUNTY HUNTER

I used to command the Galactic Rangers. We uncovered a conspiracy that threatened to destroy the entire frontier. The corporations turned the galaxy into a battlefield. They murdered my squad. I was framed and spent ten long years in prison. Now I'm out. As a bounty hunter, I travel the galaxy bringing down criminals for cash. But the only thing I'm after... is revenge.

"Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter" interactive game © 2003 Vivendi Universal Games, Inc. All rights reserved. Mace Griffin, Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter, Vivendi Universal Games, the Vivendi Universal Games logo, Black Label Games, and the Black Label Games logo are trademarks of Vivendi Universal Games, Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved. TM, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo, Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The rating icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.



YOU ARE TEX

YOU ARE FLINT

YOU ARE BRUTUS

YOU ARE HAWK

www.bruteforcegame.com



Violence
Blood



The year is 2340 and more than fifty star systems are populated with colonists. But when an alien invasion threatens to put every living organism on the endangered species list, the Confederation of worlds must dispatch its elite special forces unit, code-named Brute Force. That's you. As Brute Force, you command four separate intergalactic mercenaries. The trigger-happy assault trooper, cyborg sniper, stealthy assassin and ferocious alien are all played by you. As you guide these shepherds through 20+ missions and 6 exotic worlds,



YOU ARE BRUTE FORCE.

Your knowledge of squad based combat will be severely tested. Depending on the danger at hand, you'll need to utilize the right Brute Force member for the job. Whether you play alone or in co-op mode, the battles escalate, the plot thickens and the violence gets addictive. It's an experience of such epic proportion that it could only exist on Xbox. Good luck. To all fear of you.

**BRUTE
FORCE**
DANGEROUS ALONE DEADLY TOGETHER

ONLY ON
XBOX

www.xbox.com

X
XBOX

Names of actual products and companies are for identification only. No responsibility of their origin or trademark.

Letters



Orta uses hardware to a bad score.

Letter of the month

Cuff 'em and stuff 'em

I was interested to read Aaron Maxwell's letter ("You Don't Lock 21") in EGM #167. He seems to advocate penalties for retailers that sell M-rated games to minors. So, for example, a retailer would face a fine for selling a game like *BMX XXX*, which contains bars, brasses and profanity... In other words, things you can find in R-rated movies. Therefore, it seems reasonable that retailers should face the same penalties for selling M-rated games to minors as they do for selling R-rated movies to minors.

Except there are no penalties for selling R-rated movies to minors! By advocating fines for selling M-rated games, Marshall is putting such games in the same category as pornography. Does he want the general public to view *GTA: Vice*

City in the same light as *Rocky Balboa* or *72° Too Hot*, because they already do.

—John Fross

Although actively restricting the availability of M-rated games to underage buyers would help shield the game industry from some of the more blatant fuck it reactions, you make a good point—see we expect will go ignored by lawmakers and the mainstream media, as they pass outraged judgement on games they've never played. How many years before a president runs on pre-gaming platform?



Haberdashery hejinks

I recently rented *Pester Dragon* Orta for Xbox and thought it was pretty good, but I had a tiny problem—OK, a big problem—with the game. Where did my tigger hat go? I know I had it on when I broke out of jail, but then I

We said it

In EGM #161 (page 96) you made a joke about the Quidditch game being so improved in EA's *The Chamber of Secrets* game that we'd have EA Sports making a standalone Quidditch title in no time. How www.fox.com/cdn/ea/sports/superheros/ it is that EA has now announced *Harry Potter Quidditch World Cup*! (Editor's Note: see

Revolution games? I can't anymore cuz I shattered a bone in my foot while trying to do a Swanton-like Jeff Hardy. I'm so PO'd. The next two months will be tortur.

—Trac R

We had a similar problem, but as a result of a poorly executed triple toe-tilt double-toe-loop catch, death drop

"Do you still play your *Dance Dance Revolution* games? I can't anymore cuz I shattered a bone in my foot."

—Trac R

got on my dragon and pool, it was gone! Now my whole ensemble is thrown off.

—Jamie Carl

That just won't do. After you've played the game for 15 hours (or finish it on Hard), go to Box Game in Pandora's Box, select Costume, select Ending, and receive your precious hedges. Thought you could out-savage Tricks Editor David Hodgson, eh? Better luck next time. Don't say we never did anything for ya.

page 38 for more info.) May I request that you train me in the ways of your psychic powers so that I might use them for evil?

—Dylan Martin

Our oracular abilities are limited to forecasting events in the game industry, with occasional moments of precision in the field of sports betting. Good luck taking over the world with that.

DDR disability

Do you still play your *Dance Dance*

into cannonball. It was definitely worth it, though, no question.

CONTACT EGM

Because we're dying to know what you're thinking, your favorite color, and what's up with this weather we're having, EGM@iffonix.com is your best bet, but this also works:

EGM Letters

101 2nd Street, 8th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

MISSING AN ISSUE?

Subscription delayed? Mailman gave you the stink eye? We've got a whole plethora of people acting to solve your problems.

E-mail: subhelp@egmag.com
Website: <http://www.iffonix.com>
Phone toll-free: (800) 779-1174
Old fashioned way: P.O. Box 55722,
Boulder, CO 80522-5722

REPRINTS?

Looking for that one article about the staff and that guy? We have the technology. Call (800) 217-7874 and magic will happen.

Tales of Pokedath

How you noticed some of the classic Pokémon you've (maybe) come to know and love have been replaced by slightly altered versions in *Ruby* and *Sapphire*? Right in the Blueberry Meadow in Saffron, MD, sure did. He's got some interesting theories on what went down—look for part two next month.



PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN

PREPARE TO BE BLASTED
OUT OF THE WATER!

Visit pirates.bethsoft.com

- An epic role-playing game on sea and land
- Gorgeous graphics and realistic weather effects
- Open-ended gameplay set in exotic locales
- Exciting high seas battles and thrilling duels
- Inspired by the feature film coming July 9th



ALL SCREENSHOTS FROM XBOX VERSION

Bethesda
SOFTWARES
a ZeniMax Media company



1C
IC COMPANY



**PC
CD
ROM**

**X
XBOX**

RP
ESRB

Visit www.esrb.org or
call 1-800-771-3372
for Rating Information

feedback

Last month marked the launch of our front-to-back redesign. We understand that change is frightening, despite some screaming and shouting, most of you handled it well and even had some excellent suggestions to further improve EGM's new look....

PROS

Wow, that's all I can say. The redesign is great. I was speechless as I opened the new issue of EGM. I was skeptical when I first heard about the upcoming change, but the new layouts, colors, sections, award previews, and new music (at least I thought I heard music as I turned the first page) won me over. EGM is now second to none. My only little gripe is that someone spilled PC in my favorite magazine [Editor's Note: the PC Gaming Module column, see page 54]. Well, besides that one little problem, you are and will remain the #1 Videogame Magazine.

—Frank Reese

I'm a longtime reader, and I read say the makeover is great. I think the best change is the Previews and Reviews section: just the way everything is laid out

makes it more enjoyable

to read—for some reason the screenshots seem to stand out more and I got a better feeling for the games covered. Also, it's about damn time you showed the sales charts. It was a huge waste of space for something I, and probably many others, didn't think was that important.

Keep up the great work and don't be afraid of changing anything in the future as well.

—Philip de la Peña

Alright! Change! World spinning out of control! Panic on! and! Raciness everywhere! Panic...abiding. Sigh...returning. World...well, the world is still spinning, just not as bad.

Redesign...still shockingly different, but not a bad thing. Good work, people.

—Kurt Stonebough

CONS

I mean, I like the new Progs Start and Letters sections, but the Reviews and Previews (the reasons I buy EGM) should have been left alone. The new format lacks any semblance of organization—I loved how the games in the old EGM were color coded and divided into sections by system. Usually, the magazine is more exciting to look at but lacks the clarity of the old EGM. I hope you will take those points into consideration, as I think this redesign has great potential.

—Svat

I've been a reader for about 10 years, and I just want to say that while you guys are still doing a great job staying adult-oriented with no compromise, the new magazine layout really, truly stinks. I found it exceedingly hard on the eyes and confusing to read.

The most significant disappointment to me was the complete visual overhaul of the Review section. Please, please revert back to the old format of showing the score right on the actual review from each person. I love you guys; I just want my magazine to be readable, and I was hugely disappointed last month. I'm usually eager to dig into the new issue, but I found myself putting it down out of exasperation.

—Kwinn Vojtusi



Share on you all for the new art design. I have been a loyal subscriber for around six years now, and we'll be renewing. I always admired EGM for being the smartest gaming magazine around. The new layout attempts to be dynamic and stylized, but just hits me with the same drone as so many other magazines pulled this crap before. I don't know where else to go for gaming news. EGM was the only publication left that didn't look

and read like a dang circus. What's next? Cartoon characters for all the editors? I'd bitch about the articles, but this month's issue was too boring to get past the leads.

—Nevus S. Grubb

Thanks to all our readers for the input, but extra thanks to Hines S. Grubb for his wonderful cartoon characters idea. Look forward to next month, when every editor will have a new, cutely "funsoosy!" Editor-in-Chief Dan "Shoe" Iru has obs on Angry Armadillo. The design will continue to evolve over the next few issues, so if you've got something to contribute, get on it.

"In David Hasselhoff's levels, say, he could save drowning victims...and end up hugging his son and all that."

—Deau Wilson

Public-service announcement

Here's some info for all those diabetic Game Boy Advance players out there: A new GBA is being developed that incorporates a blood-sugar monitor. Every reading in your set range will earn points, which you can redeem for special prizes,

discounts, and games from Nintendo. Its called GlucoBoy—see www.glucoaware.com for more info. Prototypes have already proven successful at lowering blood sugar because, well, everyone wants free stuff!

—Andrew Heber
GlucoGames

Being David Hasselhoff

I was just watching *Baywatch* a few hours ago, and I got a killer idea for a game: *Baywatch* Pickers! It—you could play as David Hasselhoff, Pamela Anderson, Nicole Eggert, Yasmine Bleeth, Alexandra Paul, and whoever else starred in it.

In David Hasselhoff's levels, say, he could save drowning victims, try to escape a crazy woman he once loved, and end up hugging his son and all that, just like in the series! Pamela's levels could maybe be TSA or something, I don't know. You could drive around the city à la *Grand Theft Auto*, go to the beach and save swimmers, or build up passionate relationships with other people! Hell, this thing could even be online. I'm not sure. You know you want a *Baywatch* game.

—Deau Wilson

Yeah...no.

Cosplay komar

Even though I am not a fan of Japanese bands, I'm quite a fan of anime. I was recently contacted by Mito Jimin's letter (EGM #167) and year I jumped to it. I instantly took a photo of a Squall (Final Fantasy VII) cosplayer with a bunch of Mitsu Mitsu cosplayers from Okinawa 2000. It's not exactly Cloud Strife (Final Fantasy VII) and Bar or Gray, but close enough. Enjoy!

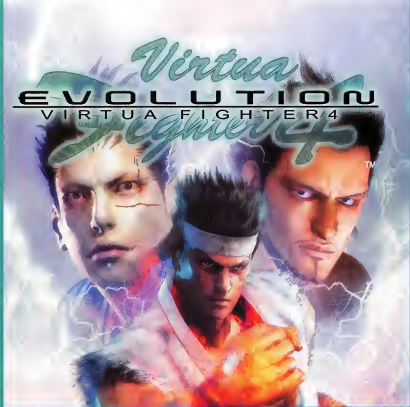
—Chromey



Chromey meets Mitsu Mitsu, an anime cosplayer who has been and foregone is reader's choice.



Virtua EVOLUTION VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 Fighter 4



THE BEATDOWN EVOLVED



SEGA



PlayStation 2



Suggestive Themes
Violence

Original: Sega © SEGA © SEGA-AM2/SEGA, 2001, 2003 "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All Rights Reserved. This logo.com is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

to something
with
your
life



or not.

> A real college degree, focused on advancing technology.

Available online or on-campus.

GAME DESIGN
VIDEO PRODUCTION
DIGITAL ANIMATION
NETWORK SECURITY
E-COMMERCE
SOFTWARE ENGINEERING
TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT
MULTIMEDIA
WEB DESIGN
DATABASE MANAGEMENT



www.uat.edu or 800.658.5744

sputtering outrage

Designer impostor

I am writing in response to your interview with Elijah Wood (*EGM* #166), star of the *Lord of the Rings* movies. My colleagues and I are somewhat frustrated about a comment you made to him at the end of the interview. You asked Elijah Wood if he would be in a new game, *Lord of the Rings: Ever Gate Wild*. By stating this, you have humiliated and destroyed the entire purpose of our club (to support Elijah Wood while maintaining morals [sic] values). Thus, as an editor community and highly respected celebrity association, we cannot allow ourselves to continue reading your magazine.

Although many of our members are *EGM* readers, due to the inebriated circumstances, they have publicly announced that they no longer support *EGM*, as it has no respect for morals. Our club is highly ranked in fan clubs, and I am sure that other readers who know we have cancelled our subscriptions will do the same. I am sure that this would be a great loss.

—Charles Decker

President of the Official Elijah Wood Fan Club

[sarcastic clapping] Oh you think we're idiots? Google rumbled you in about five seconds. The president of Elijah Wood's fan club is actually a gal named Colleen Lynch. And is she gonna be angry when she hears about this.



Pad problems

Why isn't there a Super Nintendo controller adapter for GameCube? *Clapnet vs. SNK 2* would be a helluva lot better, and I don't think that GameCube pad that looks like a SNES controller would cut the mustard. I leave it to the fine folks at *EGM* to bitch and complain to someone who will actually give a damn. I want that adapter, goddamne (and weener), and I believe you can make it happen. Either that or I'll curl up in the fetal position and weep uncontrollably.

—Cullen

Why no SNES controller adapter for GameCube? That's like asking why game controllers don't just plug directly into the base of your spine; we could give you an answer, but it'd be



word on the street

■ WHAT INNOVATIONS DO YOU HOPE THE NEXT GENERATION OF CONSOLES WILL BRING TO GAMING?



I want to see serious built into the controllers. For those private moments, like picking your play in a football game, it's definitely a plus. Seg: had something with the Dreamcast's VMU, and Nintendo's GBA link-up expands the idea, but no one has used them to their full potential.

—Sean McDonald



Online components in the box, launch software that utilizes the online-enabled hardware, Gamecube's *Play Station* 3 motion three-piece control disk and pads is rumored to all three components and sound as intended controller. And new games that focus on the trials and tribulations of a young man named Ryo Hazaki (*Shinmei*). If you can believe, so can I.

—Andrew Roche



I would love to be able to buy all the console maker's earlier games directly out of the memory of the system. For example: Sony's *PlayStation 1* and *2* games; Nintendo's NES, SNES, and GameCube games (and all previous Seg: console's games...I can dream); and Microsoft's Xbox 1 library. It'd be a little description of the game—if you wanted to buy it, you'd enter your credit card info and then the game would be unlocked, downloaded, whatever.

—Andrew Barker



Absolutely nothing, but I guess I don't want a DVD player, and I don't want power windows. Dog holders would be nice, but stick to games. That's what consoles are for.

—Matt Joyce

■ If you'd like to participate in Word on the Street, check our message boards at www.egmag.com.

OOPS!

Seababy's *The Rest of the Crap* section isn't meant to be taken seriously—that's why games don't get scores. However, we apologize for not catching the "amazingly bad game with amazingly worse packaging" line in the *Kinnaz Rally* review (*EGM* #167, page 142), considering Seababy said explicitly that he was reviewing the box art, not the game (and also that he never tried the game). We will give *Kinnaz Rally* a scorching review in an upcoming issue.



THE MOST UNREALISTIC RACING GAME EVER.



Heavily armed renegade racing
on 29 interplanetary tracks.

ROCK & ROLL RACING

The Blizzard classic. Now on
Nintendo Game Boy® Advance



© 2003 Blizzard Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved. Rock & Roll Racing is a registered trademark of Blizzard Entertainment, Inc. All other trademarks and registered trademarks are the property of their respective owners. The "E" rating logo is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB).



You've read the manga in Newtype US...

now experience the anime
in your living room.



FULL METAL PANIC!

Coming to DVD 6.10.03

Volume One available as a single disc or a Collector's Edition with a Custom Art Box and Exclusive T-shirt.

ADV FILMS

www.advfilm.com



Postmodern videogaming

We aren't bored at Arky-Farty land (y' EGM #167, page 16) about destroying the best of postmodernist Michael Foucault, Spinoza Avatars-style, really, my mother said critical theory has not entered into the discourse of videogames. Existentialism thus like incomprehensibility, fraud, and individual accountability are present in most games. If critical theory took on the gaming industry, the deconstruction of videogames could lead to the rethinking of games as texts that reflect the genealogy of culture and society. Imagine leading theorists deconstructing the anthropomorphic characters in *Animal Crossing*, or the discourse of the *Final Fantasy* series being viewed as a reclassification of language!



Winked Frownsed out a big game

—Matt Whaley

We imagined it, all right. We are now officially encouraging the letter-writing public to invade us with incomprehensible game-related philosophical treatises—not that we don't get those already, mind. Keep it short.

"Can you give me Brett Isaacoff's phone number?"

—shag_monkey

completely made up. Have you actually tried Neri's SNES-like GameCube pad, though? It's great. Of course, you can't buy it here, but you can order it through importers like ncs.com for about \$22.

Cheaters always win

I would like to start by saying that *SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs* has to be one of the best games ever for PlayStation 2. However, "game enhancer" cheat devices like CodeBreaker, Action Replay, GameShark, etc., are ruining the game. There is a code for the CodeBreaker that allows players to respawn as a ghost after they die—so they're invisible, but still able to kill others. Another code disables the ability of users to vote the cheater off the server, ruining the game for everyone else. *SOCOM* developer Zipper Interactive and Sony need to step in and kick these people off. If you're against cheating, please sign the petition at www.petitionline.com/cheatsof/petition.html and help save *SOCOM*.

—Mark Mizer

EGM dating service

Well, that Brett Isaacoff (Letters, EGM

#158) is cooler than Vampire Hunter D and Matthew Good. Although Matthew Good still has the coolness factor... and Vampire Hunter D is a fictional character, which kind of puts a damper on things. Can you give me Brett Isaacoff's phone number? He can play me beautiful music with his bagpipes anytime.

—shag_monkey@outlook.com

We don't see it, but whatever. Brett specifically asked us not to reveal his digits—perhaps he knew his visage would cause general swooning among the female population. You'll just have to make do with this picture, sealed with a kiss by also-dreamy Copy Editor Greg Ford. Enjoy! **AK**



OOPS!

I guess you guys were in a pretty festive mood last month, what with the magazine redesign and all. However, I'm not sure tossing Inaba gold awards around was the right way to celebrate. *Midnight Club 2* may be a nice game, but it's not fine enough to beat the laws of arithmetic: $8.0 + 8.0 + 9.0/3 = 8.66$. Cheers on an otherwise spiffy change!

—Brian Hardy

Dogs. *Midnight Club 2* should have earned a silver award. Dang new math, who understands it?

EBGAMES™
electronics boutique®

XBOX
LIVE

SHOOT TO THRILL



ONLY ON

XBOX

CALL 1-800-800-5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU OR VISIT US AT WWW.EBGAMES.COM

A New Class of Monkey



Pink Monkey

Most Likely to Be a Pop Star



El Toro

Most Likely to Grab the Bull by the Horns



Harley Q. Win

Most Likely to Annoy the King



Billy

Most Likely to Get a Speeding Ticket



Monko Polo

Most Likely to Find a Legendary Banana



Natalie

Most Likely to Lose Her Wits



Marshall

Most Likely to Punch the Ref



Larry

Most Likely to Step in Monkey Poo



Mr. White

Most Likely to Be an Evil Scientist



Balboa

Most Likely to Live in a Meal Locker



Norman

Most Likely to Drive a Humvee



Specter

Most Likely to Take Over the World



Catching Madness



Leo

Most Likely to Catch a Fever



Stephenson

Most Likely to Walk the Plank



Jimmy

Most Likely to Save the World



George

Most Likely to Be Inquisitive



Buzz

Most Likely to Be Lost in Space



Arthur

Most Likely to Get Pierced



Parka

Most Likely to Chiv



Punto

Most Likely to Sink the Gondola



Cleo

Most Likely to Walk Like an Egyptian



Yellow Monkey

Most Likely to Be a Pro Wrestler



Libby

Most Likely to Swim to Ellis Island



Spud

Most Likely to Be a Hypnotist

300 monkeys. They're smarter. They're zanier.
And they're trying to take over the world.



PlayStation.2

APE ESCAPE™ 2

© 2003 Activision Inc. and its affiliates. Published and controlled by Activision Publishing, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark and Activision 00 and Halo are trademarks of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Halo is a trademark of Bungie Studios. Developed by Bungie Studios, U.S. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in U.S. and/or other countries. All rights reserved. Licensed by Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. to use with the "PS2" Family logo on registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The "PS2" Family logo is a registered trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The Bungie logo is a registered trademark of the Bungie logo.



HANG ON FOR YOUR LIFE.



PlayStation 2



WAKEBOARDING

UNLEASHED FEATURING SHAUN MURRAY



PULL OFF
CRAZY TRICKS



HOLD
ON TIGHT



TEAM UP IN 2-PLAYER CO-OP MODE



YOUR FRIEND FLIES

YOU DRIVE

Water moves. Screenshots don't. For the real experience, check out

www.wakeboardingunleashed.com

0477441

\$10 OFF*

Wakeboarding Unleashed™
Featuring Shaun Murray

for PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system.

ACTIVISION
GAMES
ACTIVISION.COM

BEST
BUY
BestBuy.com

Some restrictions apply. See website for details. Offer good in combination with other coupons or offers. Not valid on plus products. Subject to store. While supplies last. See website for details. © 2003 Best Buy. *Plus "Total" Select "On" to apply package price. While "OFF" on the coupon and price in the region coupon ends first.

4 00054 77566 2



gaming news, interviews, reformed gangsters, and other stuff

WHAT'S NEXT?

Is it too early to look toward the next wave of game consoles? Yeah, but EGM does it anyway—with your help!

The future is scary enough, what with the threat of mutant killer flus and an left-side lineup of *Who Wants to Marry a Millionaire* Space Alien? reality shows. Combine that with the certainty that our game consoles will be obsolete in three years and we're ready for deep carbon freezes. But ignoring the grinding wheels of progress—and the cycle of the game-hardware market—is an unhelpful possibility, now that rumors of the next systems are flying and our industry mates are starting to blink.

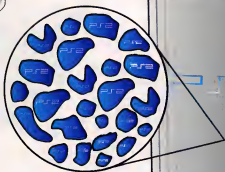
Sony, Microsoft, and Nintendo are engaged in

heavy game theory, sizing up each other's plans and trying to figure out where to unleash the new consoles. If Sony tries to milk profits from PlayStation 2, then the debut of all three follow-up systems could be pushed back to 2006. But go-time will come sooner if a rival launches a console in 2005. One thing's for sure: Sony won't have the year-long head start it enjoyed in the last generation. As Xbox office officer Robbic Bush says, "We won't be late this time." EGM decided to be early. We've put together everything we've heard about the next wave of systems, thrown in some rampant speculation, and invited you, the readers, to send us your concepts—the silliest at which appear right here on this page.

Now, we just have to wait for about two years to see if any of us is right.



Illustrations by: 1) Andy Maggs; created for EGM magazine; 2) S.J. Drake; 3) Mike Sullivan; 4) Anonymous; 5) the Internet; 6) Anonymous; via the Internet; 7) Emily Postovsky; 7) Dan Portenko; 8) Stu Foster; 9) Felix Pitts; 10) Jeremy Gellie; 11) Anonymous; via the Internet



IBM illustration by Bill Schorr

■ EAT 2005

PLAYSTATION 3

Sony banks big on cellular theory

Sony declined our request for a comment on its PS3 strategy, but the company has already spilled the guts of its perspective in a few ways. In 2002, Shiroshi Okamoto, chief technology officer for Sony's games unit, outlined the technology the company will use as the brain of its third-generation machine. The system will pack a new microprocessor jointly developed by Sony, Toshiba, and IBM at an estimated R&D cost of \$400 million. "Moore's Law is too slow for us," Okamoto said, referring to the computer-geek axiom that chip performance doubles roughly every 18 months. "We can't wait 20 years to achieve a thousand-fold increase in PlayStation performance."

Recent patent disclosures show that PS3's "cell-computing" architecture will pack many processors onto a single chip, as opposed to just the one processor that's on conventional chips. This cell technology—described as a "supercomputer on a chip"—will break down processing duties and assign them to the various processors. In a way, it works like a beehive, in which bees are paraded out to specific worker bees.

Since programming duties could even be buzzed across a network—passed via PS3's sure-to-be-included broadband connection—there's wild speculation that the system could tap other machines over the Internet for extra processing power. Okamoto said the console would be capable of 1 billion floating-point operations per second, or the processing equivalent of 100 Pentium 4 chips (just one of these chips serves as the brain of a modern PC).

Graphics-card makers Nvidia and ATI Technologies are fighting to get their technology inside PS3's successor, but Sony's engineers could simply dedicate a separate cell chip to the task of crunching graphics. However, Nvidia CEO Jen-Hsun Huang says that bypassing the graphics-chip makers'

shader technologies would be a big mistake. (Shaders are miniprograms that can quickly and easily draw effects such as reflective surfaces.)

The reaction from game developers is mixed. Some express awe at the machine's supposed power. But others, like Epic (Unreal Championship) President Tim Sweeney, say it would be virtually impossible to program games for a system with so many processors working in parallel. "I've never heard

anything for a single game across a network, since the delays in fetching results from a remote console are huge compared to the speed of internal processing.

Beyond the chip front, we've heard much speculation that the next generation of Sony's machine will act as a home server, with a hard drive, TV-like recording capabilities, PS1 and PS2 backwards compatibility, and Web-browsing capabilities. "Sony's next box will make good on the unfulfilled

Pelias." Of course, Sony made the same prebunch pie-in-the-sky predictions about PS2, and three years later, we're still waiting for the hard-drive add-on. One chipmaker says Sony may include CD- or DVD-burning capabilities in its next box. Rumors suggest that Blu-Ray, a technology co-developed by Sony that fills disks with ten DVDs' worth of data, will also be used. But the old question remains: Is this box for games or for an entire family looking to control all of its dig-

"Using a ton of processors in parallel would be very difficult. It's already hard to use the processors in the PS2 correctly."

—A developer who spoke on condition of anonymity

from Sony [about] how they intend for people to use the hardware," Sweeney says. "I can't imagine how you will actually program [for that console]." Meanwhile, Peter Skalkowsky, editor of *Microprocessor Report*, says it doesn't make sense to spread the

promise of the PlayStation 2." Okamoto said in a speech to game developers "I will compete not only with game consoles from Nintendo and Microsoft, but also with PCs from the likes of Dell... and Hewlett-Packard, and with TV set-top boxes from Motorola and

tal entertainment? And since the processors to mass produce cell chips will be unavailable until at least 2005, could Sony run into the same manufacturing problems that plagued the PS2 graphics chip and led to shortages at the system's launch?

the future is (sorta) now

SO IT'S NOT THE PS3—OR EVEN THE PS2.5—BUT IT'S STILL NEW

Gen't wait for PS3? Then look to Japan, where a new PlayStation has already landed. Don't get too excited—it's actually just a PS2 with a few key enhancements for the same price. The biggest tweak: The unit can play DVDs in progressive scan, a higher-res video mode for Richie-Rich gamers who own high-definition televisions. Other enhancements include a built-in motor for the DVD remote, the ability to play home-burned DVD-R videos, and a new cooling fan that makes 30 percent less racket. But all that unbelieveable luxury comes with one wee sacrifice: The FireWire port, which allows system-link gameplay in a few titles, has been removed from this model. Sony won't confirm whether this new-bangled PS2 will come Stateside, but we expect it to arrive overabundantly.

All the new PS2 packs a FireWire port and has two new remote buttons—Open/Close (for the system's disc tray) and Power/Quit to fix the gentleman rusestaker who turns on your PS2.





■ EDA: 2005

XBOX 2

Generation Y may do more than play games

Microsoft's next box, code-named Xenon, offers the most, colorless gas—no hot fires please), is scheduled for a 2005 release, according to developers we spoke with. Expect it once again to be based on PC technology, with a single Intel or AMD microprocessor or multiple Intel chips working together in multiprocessing fashion like today's servers do. The advantage for Microsoft: The use of conventional chips worked fine with Xbox, allowing the company to make its processor chase late in the

game and still field a box relatively quickly. The disadvantage is that an off-the-shelf Intel chip may be no match for the performance Sony has in mind with its cell processor. Another disadvantage of multiple chips: Programming for the console could become much more difficult.

Meanwhile, ATI Technologies and Nvidia—the company that supplied the graphics technology for the original Xbox—continue to bid for the right to provide Xenon's graphics chip. Microsoft may even

consider developing its own chip; the Xenon project inherited designers from Microsoft's WebTV team. However, it's unlikely this untested group can pull off an extremely sophisticated graphics chip. On the other hand, it's more than likely the box will use WebTV's digital-video recording capability to store TV programs on its hard drive. Microsoft officials have been taking bids

from hard-drive manufacturers for Xenon, claiming they need 40GB drives (the current Xbox's drive is 8GB).

We fully expect the next Xbox—like the original—to come with a built-in broadband port and to continue driving the growth of Xbox Live, Microsoft's burgeoning online gaming service.

■ EDA: 2005

CUBE²

Is online in the gameplan?

While Sony and Microsoft officials might hold out hope that Nintendo—like Sega—will give up on the hardware business, Nintendo President Satoru Iwata has confirmed the company is working

on a GameCube successor due out "around the same time as rival makers' [consoles]." The only solid information so far is that Nintendo will once again tap ATI Technologies, the Canada-based graphics-

chip maker. Given Nintendo's we-only-care-about-games philosophy, it's a safe bet the Cube follow-up will lack the home-server-like top-box features Sony and Microsoft are hyped about. We

...we expect the console will rely solely on Wavebird-like wireless controllers.

chip maker. Odds are pretty good that Nintendo will also use IBM and the PowerPC microprocessor architecture again. Otherwise, we figure Nintendo's next system will support or link up with whatever Game Boy iteration is ruling portable gaming in 2005, and we expect the console will rely

solely on Wavebird-like wireless controllers. Given Nintendo's we-only-care-about-games philosophy, it's a safe bet the Cube follow-up will lack the home-server-like top-box features Sony and Microsoft are hyped about. We are hoping, however, that Nintendo will finally incorporate built-in online features into its system. The only other big question mark is the system's shape: Nintendo's already done a cube. What's next? A pyramid? Hey, it could happen. **A6** —Dan Takahashi



nightmare Future

THE BEST OF THE WORST READER CONCEPTS

Some of you readers, bless your heart, didn't let laziness or lack of artistic talent or a crippling mental handicap stop you from submitting sketches and renderings of the next systems. Awful your eyes from these reader-made concepts that are so bad, they're good—and by good, we mean just plain awful.

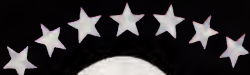


Alfred Hitchcock and The Hitchcock Awards are trademarks and copyrights of The Hitchcock Trust. Licensed by Universal Studios Licensing LLLP. All rights reserved.



marc eckō
scopes

THE
peeps!



complex magazine published by Marc Eckō
www.complexmagazine.com

eckō.com
shop online

Danny Masterson
in the Peeps

That f**king John game ain't s***, dawg

SHADY'S DEAL

Eminem
"Loses
Himself"
in first
videogame

As top-hop heads are aware, there's a thin line between fun and "Slim." Just ask *Conspiracy Entertainment*. At this summer's Electronic Entertainment Expo game-biz show, the publisher will show off PS1 budget title *Mix TV Presents Eminem*, the first attractive tribute to rapper Marshall "Eminem" Mathers. Due in June, the game fuses video clips from Slim's family hits like "The Real Slim Shady" and "My Name Is..." with traditional mix-game challenges like slider puzzles (you know, those ones you move around to make a picture), billed as a form of "enthusiast appreciation," the title is the first in a proposed series of PS1 pop-culture-oriented offerings that will still far a decidedly see-thing-thing 10 bucks a pop. —Scott Steinberg

GRUDGE MATCH

Nerd vision vs. night vision in the final staredown



MAX FISCHER vs. SAM FISCHER

Sure, *Splitter Cell's* Sam Fisher is crafty and good with the stealth kills, but he never wrote a hit play, attempted to seduce a first-grade teacher, or saved Little like *Bastion's* Max Fischer. They're both sneaky bastards, to be sure, but there can be only one Fischer King....

THE UNIFORM

Crested blue blazer, glasses...here?

Fleeting fedoras, slimming fancy neck, gun holder, night-vision goggles
Advantage: Sam

MAIN SQUEZZE

The beautiful first teacher gets away, but Max still ends up with a cute (and age-appropriate) nerd girl
Advantage: Max

The trigger of his 5.7mm SC Pistol

WEAPON OF CHOICE

Pellet gun capable of plating off a Scorpion from three yards

SC-20K M.A.W.S. rifle, capable of bringing down steelheadies from 1,000 feet
Advantage: Sam

NAME ANOTHER

Foxima Chis

Smash Fire
Advantage: Smash

LIKELY TO BE PLAYED IN TV MOVIE BY

Paul Peiffer from *The Wonder Years*

That dreamy George Clooney
Advantage: Unless Winain Cooper stars opposite Paul...Sam

SEQUEL POTENTIAL

His theatrical adaptation of *Max* set in ancient Greece carries into a postgraduate year at *Bastion*

Was at least one follow-up movie left before getting his due for this s***
Advantage: Sam

LAST MAN STANDING

Sam hardly disarms the *Bastion* crew and caps him right through the goofy hat as the *Get Stevens* babes in.

NEWS BITS: READ THEM ALL AND YOU CAN HAVE DESSERT



White Lady Miss Kier says MaMa, we all love.



DEE-LAWSUIT
The *Dive* Lady Miss Kier of the now-defunct band *Dee-Lite* is suing Sega for \$750,000, claiming that *Uta*, the main character in Sega's *Soul Eater* 5 series, copies her "de groove" image. The world awaits the verdict.

A GETAWAY MOVIE
How weird is this—a film based on a game based on the style of Guy Ritchie's *Knives Out*? According to *The Hollywood Reporter*, a big-screen version of *Sony's The Getaway* is scheduled to start production in 2004 and hit theaters in time for the game's sequel.

ARE YOU READY FOR SOME QUIDDITCH?
We called this one. EA recently announced a new *Potter* game that could fit right in with their sports line—*Harry Potter: Quidditch World Cup*, coming in all consoles. We hope John "A trick play is a give-up play" Madden will be commenting.





Savage by nature.

Play as young knight, Seig Warheit, who must face off
against an old friend in this gothic action adventure.
To fight, summon and command seven different warrior legions
each with their own signature weaponry.
Chaos Legion...a graphic masterpiece and savage gothic opera
played out over 13 levels of real time, cut-throat action!

"If you loved Devil May Cry,
you'll love Chaos Legion!" - PSM

CHAOS LEGION

PlayStation 2

CAPCOM
capcom.com



Blood
Violence

NINTENDO SPEEDS AHEAD

The big N rolls out its big titles for fall

Two pair is poker, that ain't so hot. But two pair of new Nintendo games? That'll get us reaching for our wallets. Check out a couple new sequels that stress two-player gameplay and a couple remade classics, all due later this year. As for more screens and hands-on impressions next month, you can bet on it.



MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH
It's always tough to do other things while you're driving—checking a CD, making a call or your cell phone, rolling the gas on your tail with a turtle shell, etc.—and that's a problem Nintendo plans to address in this GameCube update to its bestselling franchise. Pair up any two Mario characters, then piece one up front to drive while the other rides shotgun on the back, tossing items to help you get (and keep) the lead. You'll find special items only certain combinations can use, so it's a good thing you can swap partners on the fly. Oh, and two- to four-player split-screen won't be the only multiplayer—hook up two GameCubes via broadband adapters and play with up to eight (exactly eight) people at once on two TVs.



PIKMIN 2
Like Mario Kart, the sequel to Nintendo's port of real-time strategy game stresses the joys of cooperation. Big-nosed astronaut Captain Olimar has brought along his assistant this time, and together (either two-player split-screen or single player and switching between them), the two will raise an army of the ant-like Pikmin plant people, commanding them to attack enemies, retrieve treasures, destroy obstacles, or do whatever other dirty work stands in the way. Two new types of Pikmin—purple and white—join the old cast of yellow, red, and blue. And since each color has its own unique ability, that means near-guaranteed. Plus, Pikmin 2 has no time limit, so hopefully, it will last longer than the short-but-sweet original.



■ Hopped up on magic mushrooms and fire flowers, Mario and Luigi didn't spot Captain Olimar and his assistant crossing the road until it was too late.



METAL GEAR SOLID THE TWIN SNAKES

O-mig-Dabo oomus, I'mma hear ya say "ya-ah!" *Metal Gear's* exploring motion sneaks its way back onto a Nintendo system in *Elemental Darkness* dev Super Silicon Knights (under the watchful eyes of Nintendo and Konami) handles this remake of the original *MGS*. No screenshots yet, only the new artwork you see above, showing hero Solid Snake (on the left) and his evil genetic twin Liquid Snake—the "Twin Snakes" from the title, in case you were wondering. We expect at least *MGS2*-class graphics and gameplay features (like the ability to switch to a first-person view for shooting), plus a few new surprises, but we'll know much more by next issue, after we've given it the once-over at the Electronic Entertainment Expo.



SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 4

OK, *Super Mario Advance 4* is actually a graphically enhanced version of the 8-bit Nintendo classic *Super Mario Bros. 3*, which is why it looks almost identical to the last Mario 3 remake included on Super Nintendo's *Super Mario All-Stars*. Confused? Don't be. All you really need to know is that this game takes the 2D platforming foundation laid by the original *Super Mario Bros.* and powers it up with 100 mushrooms' worth of improvements—lots of new enemies, new powers for Mario (the slide, and turn into a statue, among others), and more than sixty levels that put them all to the test. Yes, it's one of the greatest games of all time, and no, we can't wait to play it in portable form. —Mark MacDonell



Somehow right now, big robots—such as these mechs—no longer whoring on each other.

INSTANT EXPERT: ANIME

From zero to otaku in 60 seconds

If you think anime (say it right: ah-ni-may) is a sticky tree sap used by varnish makers, then you're absolutely right—and absolutely weird (because, like, why do you know that?). You're also missing out on a type of make-in-Japan attraction that goes hand in sweetly hand with game culture. Steady up to fit your way into the ingeri-stare crowd...

He is your god

Start worshipping Hayao Miyazaki, the writer/director/lead animator of Princess Mononoke, Kiki's Delivery Service, Castle in the Sky, and 2002's Oscar-winning Spirited Away, all available on DVD.

Don't get caught without these classics...

- **Neon Genesis Evangelion**—An arduous, psychological action-drama series that has become an anime legend.
- **Akira**—A so-fi masterpiece, as stylish as it is sensational.
- **Love Hina**, **Trick Myo**, and **Rave 1/2**—Among the best series in the popular "wacky rom-comedy" genre.
- **Grave of the Fireflies**—A beautiful, tragic gut-punch of a movie.

Build street cred with these terms...

- **Mecha**—Means "governer." Also used to describe the pan-genre anime subgenre (which may involve tentacles).
- **Mecha**—Anime subgenre that stars super-duper robots.
- **Otaku**—An extreme fan, someone likely to dress up as his or her favorite character, watch only Japanese-subtitled shows, and blurt on the Internet about American anime companies.



Bone up for nothin'

The Cartoon Network is hip to anime, with so-so kid-friendly shows like *Dragon Ball Z* and *Nu 10* to *Hakuto* airing in the afternoons and edgier fare like *Trigun* in the wee-hour Adult Swim lineup. Best of all is the stylish *Cowboy Bebop*, on Sunday through Thursday at 1 a.m. EST. Oh, don't go blowing \$25 on a DVD without reading a review at animenon.com or animenetwork.com. And be on guard for that whole tentacle thing.

—Casey Lee

OLD SCHOOL 10 years ago in EGM

On the cover: *Jeonin Strike* (Arcade Park)



Game of the Month:

Pocky & Rocky

We won't hold it against you if you've never heard of Nintendo's tag-down, vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up *Pocky & Rocky*. But this cartoony one- or two-player game set in feudal Japan and starring a cute female priestess and her feisty raccoon pal sure scored well with the Review Crew. If you're curious, check out the recent portable version for your Game Boy Advance (*Pocky & Rocky and Rocky*).

Virtual Calamity

After the movie *The Lawnmower Man* made the term "virtual reality" a household word, Sega jumped on the bandwagon with Sega VR—a head-mounted display for its 16-bit Genesis. "Sega VR will change the way people play and are entertained at home," Tom Kalrauskas, then Sega's president and CEO, said at its June '93 debut. The \$200 device and four planned games (which all sucked, frankly) never saw the light of day.

Three-Dice-Wha?

In 1993, 3DO had hopes of making the next big console. Its 3DO Multiplayer was shown in public for the first time that year before going on sale for \$796. A rep for the project stated, "We're doing everything we can to establish 3DO as the next standard in consumer electronics." Yep, right up there with Betamax.

Big Cat

Also in June '93, Atari laid out plans to release its Jaguar game system. We now know it would eventually fail, but at first, the Jag sounded so...nifty. "The idea of a 64-bit system is earth-shattering, and kids and adults will be amazed at both the imagery and manipulative capabilities," said Atari President Sam Tramiel.

"And we are proud that our entry will be fully made in America."

Yes, people really used to talk like that.



BY THE NUMBERS

Raw data that proves you are not gaming alone

41%

Percentage of Americans who say they'll buy at least one game in 2003. Percentage of those people who will actually finish the games they buy? We're gonna guess 10%.

145,000,000

The number of Americans who say they played video games and computer games in 2002. GTA, anyone?

221,000,000

The number of games sold in 2002 to those 145 million people (about one-third of all games purchased).

\$6,900,000,000

The amount of money those 145 million people spent on games in 2002 (\$5.5 billion on console games).



Milk make bones strong. Bones no break when Hulk drink milk.

got milk?[®]

100% PASTEURIZED FLUID COW MILK. MILK MAKE BONES STRONG. ©2001 NATIONAL DAIRY PROCESSOR PROMOTION BOARD. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

AFTERTHOUGHTS: THE SIMS

Pestering the guy who lets us play God

Everything's better with videogames, even basic bodily functions. That's one lesson we've learned since *The Sims*, the hugely popular life simulator, landed all three consoles. Another thing we've learned is that holding a conversation with Michael Perry, design director for *The Sims*, is tough. There's the whole vulgar personal hygiene issue, and then every couple minutes he jumps up, sprints to the bathroom, goes and makes lunch, or possibly gets in the hot tub (where, curiously, we've always compelled to joke him). He talks in this funny Charlie Brown's teacher's language, and what's with all the weird pictograms? Oh wait, we were just having another *Sims* dream. Never mind.

EGM: Is there anything you tried for the console version that had to be cut or just didn't work?

Michael Perry:

Yeah, we had a few different things for a while we were trying to decide if we should add a lot of traditional console elements to *The Sims*, meaning action, button-mashing stuff. We even had a design where the player could have their Sim bump into objects and these little karma coins would pop out. And it seemed like a great idea for a game like *Sims*, but *The Sims* is such a unique gameplay experience that it felt like it wasn't *The Sims* anymore.

EGM: What do you think of the TV commercial with the plastic-leaking mother and daughter playing strip poker? Or did we misread what was going on there entirely?

MP: [laughs] I love that commercial. When we created new objects exclusive to the console versions of *The Sims*, we really tried to come up with some of the craziest things we could think of, and the strip poker table and the bag zipper were two of the first we designed. During the process we tried to think of how they would look in an ad or on TV, so it's great to see the strip poker table made it into the commercial.

EGM: You came up with some pretty bizarre ones, like the monkey baller and teppanyaki table—was anything too far out there to make the cut?

MP: We were experimenting with some two-player, knock-button-mashing game objects—games you could pull in your backyard! While we could make each one of those into fun little mangles, well, it didn't feel like *The Sims* anymore. It felt more appropriate for something like *Super Monkey Ball*. So maybe they weren't really far-out objects, but they weren't *Sims*-style objects.

EGM: So is there a name code or what? The

world wants to know! Presumably.

MP: There isn't one in the game itself, but if you get some of the cheat hardware, you can do it with that.

EGM: Has anyone broken the news to [Sims creator] Will Wright that the videogame version of *Rattfights* has been cancelled, seeing as how he's such a fan of the show and all?

MP: I don't know. Will has a really cool place in Berkeley, CA called the Stupid Fun Club, which is full of robots if you've ever wanted to feel like you're living inside a videogame, that's the place. —Dustin Lee



summer fashion tips

When it comes to *Sims* fashion, we stick with the muscle-chested holding guy wearing hot pants, sack garters, and little else. But that's us. If you're more of a *Sims* dressmaker, Design Director Michael Perry has a hot tip for you: Be social. "Every Sim you meet has a unique skin—mohawks, liberty splices, mohawks, etc.—that you can put on your own Sim," he says. "And the way to unlock all these skins is to make friends with every last one." So there you have it: how get out there and talk, talk, joke, talk, and compliment your little heart out.



KOEI

www.koei.com

PlayStation 2

VIEW

*Strike hard,
strike fast
and strike deep.*

TARGET

NAVAL OPS

WARSHIP GUNNER

Build a state-of-the-art war machine. Sail it into the heart of enemy waters, engage hostile vessels, avoid high-G anti-ship missiles, and put it to the test. You won't just prove your ship in battle... you'll prove yourself, too.

July 2003



Equip your ship with weapons systems, propulsion systems, defensive hardware, and even aircraft. Access over 800 components, 200 aircraft, and over 400 armament types.

Invest in new technology, salvage parts from enemy wrecks, and earn bounties using completion bonuses.

● Real-time stealth tactics ● Precise friendly missiles ● Field hospitals, submarines, convoys, and more ● Parts are traded from WWII to a next-day weapons market, and more ● Full range of the Navy ● World War II Strategy System ● Survival mode, WWII mode, plus much more

PRODUCTS RANGE FROM
RATING PENDING TO EVERYONE

RP-E

CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

*"In war there is no substitute for victory". - General MacArthur***NAVAL SUPREMACY AND GLOBAL CONQUEST**

AVAILABLE NOW

P.T.O.I.V
The Official PlayStation 2 Magazine

The KOEI logo is a registered trademark of KOEI Co., Ltd. The PlayStation 2 logo is a registered trademark of KOEI Corporation and KOEI Co., Ltd. © 2003 MAGES INC. / © 2003 KOEI Co., Ltd. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings are a trademark of the Entertainment Software Association.

THE MOVIE

A slick new breed of big-screen videogames proves that the game biz has finally figured out how to play nice with Hollywood



GAME: RELOADED

Somewhere in the deserts of New Mexico lies a potent reminder of the checkered history of movie-based videogames. It's there that in September 1963, 14 tractor trailers pulled up to a landfill and dumped their cargo. 5 million unsold Atari 2600 cartridges of *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial*, the videogame based on Steven Spielberg's classic film. The game—which cost \$20 million to license and was developed in only six weeks—was a failure of epic proportions, largely because of its clunky gameplay (great critics were returned to stores). It also ushered in the long-standing trend of cash games based on blockbuster flicks. For years, seeing a movie game on a store shelf was akin to spying Peaky Blinders' name on a movie poster. The message: Run for your life.

But things may be changing. Movie games are going through a creative renaissance, fueled by a burgeoning collaborative relationship between Hollywood and the games industry, and the stigma of the movie game as a cheap cash-in is melting away. While we've played a handful of good movie

games (Aladdin for Genesis, GoldenEye for Nintendo 64), they've been the exception rather than the rule. But lately, several solid movie titles have hit in rapid-fire succession. It started last year with the belle-l'etage-average *Spider-Man* and the even better *Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*. This year, games like the just-released *Enter the Matrix* are showing how far the relationship between developers and filmmakers has come. Gone are the days of movie-themed titles that seemed to exist only to lure in

matching a great movie license with a great game can be an explosive combination. The proof is in the numbers. Last year's *Two Towers* game earned Electronic Arts \$175 million, more than what most movies make at the box office. Similarly, Activision's *Spider-Man* has raked up more than \$200 million in sales. Not surprisingly, those blockbuster figures have changed the way film executives approach movie games. In the past, "executives making [movie game] deals couldn't give a rat's ass about what

with rushed production schedules and lousy sales. Now, after years of this vicious cycle repeating itself, executives finally understand that a movie star's face on a game box won't trick people into parting with their cash. License or not, it's the game inside the box that matters.

Along with realizing the importance of gameplay, film producers and directors are also beginning to show interest in games as a storytelling medium. "Filmmakers used to see films as the apex of a [property's] uni-

"No one looks at the *Godfather* film and says, 'Oh, it's just an attempt to cash in on the book.'"

—Electronic Arts Producer Neil Wong

mainstream consumers who don't know any better. Today's movie games appear to be gripping experiences that complement and expand on each film universes.

Why the change? In short, Hollywood and the games industry finally realized that

kind of game experience would fall out on the other end," says Shiny President Dave Perry, designer of *Enter the Matrix*. "[The executives] were just making money, pulling together deals." But more often than not, these deals resulted in shoddy movie games

verse, and everything else was derivative, like lunch pails and action figures," explains Paul Baldwin, VP of marketing at Xombi Reader publisher Eidos. "But now, games are the first merchandising opportunity when

(continued on page 40)

PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

THE HULK

VG Games | Movie: June 29 | Game: Out now

As the Hulk film arrives in theaters, it already has a sequel: the videogame. "[The Hulk game] is deliberately set after the events of the movie, with a new story line that extends beyond the film," says Nicholas Longano of Vivendi Universal. The game also blends the movie's story with the Hulk's comic-book roots, adding villains such as Flex, Rampage, and Hell-Lite.

Although the game has a unique storyline, it's still tied to the movie. "We had access to the sets and access to the digital-effects work being done during production," says Longano. One product of this collaboration is the in-game model of

the Hulk, which *EA* created with the help of industrial Digital & Weta, the company responsible for the movie's visual effects. The actor who plays the Hulk, Eric Roberts, also lends his voice and likeness to the game. (You play as both Bruce Banner and his destructive alter ego.) And while no one will confirm it, we've heard that by closely watching the movie, players may gain insights into the game's hidden features. So pay attention! "We think a great instinctively inspired game can only serve to boost the franchise as a whole," explains Longano. For now, it's going to be easy being green.



Hulk smash? Yes, of course. But Hulk smash? Well, sorta. As wispy Bruce Banner, you must avoid bad guys.

PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCUBE

TERMINATOR 3: RISE OF THE MACHINES

Multi | Movie: July 3 | Game: Fall '03

John Bots, president of Black Ops Entertainment, has been on both sides of the movie-game issue. "In the early '90s I programmed a RoboCop vs. Terminator game, and we certainly did have Arnold Schwarzenegger," he remembers. But times have changed, and now the king of action lenses is leading his voice and likeness to Ali's upcoming T3 game. "It changes the whole feel of the game to have Arnold staying on-screen as you walk through levels," says Bots. *Rise of the Machines* will also feature other members of the film's cast, including Gavin Coates and Kristanna Loken, the Terminator.

The game—a first-person shooter that includes third-person hand-to-hand fighting levels—already follows the film, so expect to battle on top of the yellow crane seen in the trailer. But about 40 percent of the game involves a futuristic story line that's only revealed briefly in the movie. "What happened in the future between Terminator 2 and Terminator 3? Did John Connor?" asks T2's director, James Cameron. "Why do all Terminators look the same? There are the kinds of mysteries the game can explore in greater detail." On top of all that, T3 will include extra movie scenes you won't see in theaters. "After *Enter the Matrix*," says Steve Alonso, *Rise's* VP of marketing, "we knew our T3 game had to include Arnold and extra film footage."



The game can match the cinematic and cinematic appeal of a film. "Filmmakers like Sam Raimi [*Spider-Man*], Peter Jackson [*Lord of the Rings*], Jonathan Mostow [*Terminator 3*], Ang Lee [*The Hulk*], and the Wachowski brothers [*The Matrix*] have started collaborating with game developers. Just ask Sherry Perry, who thought he'd have to beg to get one exclusive movie scene for *Enter the Matrix*. As it turned out, the Wachowskis shot an hour of film footage specifically for the game. They also gave Perry's team complete access to the film's sets and crew. Still, you have to wonder why directors are suddenly giving game companies such unprecedented resources. According to *Terminator 3* director Jonathan Mostow, it all comes down to the allure of an expanded film universe: "There's only so much story you can squeeze into a two-hour movie," Mostow says. "But the game provides limitless hours of play and a reward of opportunities to explore [other] aspects of the Terminator legend." All the accoutrements of Hollywood participation, however, don't necessarily lead to compelling gameplay. The biggest challenge for movie-game makers is delivering an experience that feels like a film but also works as a game. "If you were adapting a



In his game, EA's developers appropriated Arnold's look and voice for a game.

PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCUBE

LORD OF THE RINGS: RETURN OF THE KING

EA Games | Movie: December 2003 | Game: November 2003

It came out last year's *Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* game had one very important fan: the film's director, Peter Jackson. "Peter thought we did such a good job that we're taking the collaboration to the next level this year," explains Neil Young, the game's executive producer. That's no halting-and-stating, green-light. *The Two Towers* was already considered a turning point in movie-game collaborations—the game features the voices and likenesses of all the film actors, not to mention exclusive movie footage.

So what's the next level? This year, EA has members of its game team on the set in New Zealand, working alongside the film's special-effects pros. Even the movie's stunt team performed for EA's motion-capture studio. "We're taking the actual digital models for characters from the movie and putting those into the game," Young explains.

Beyond the richer access to film assets, EA is promising this year's game will have deeper gameplay and be roughly a third longer than *The Two Towers*. Best of all, Gollum finally makes an appearance. "Peter wanted to keep him secret in last year's game, but this year he's definitely in there," says Young. How precious.



With this ring, thou art mine! Don't let the sun play in these screens, fool you—King returns with on-top play.





- MAXIM

The **Getaway**

SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT AMERICA PRESENTS A TEAM SOHO PRODUCTION STARRING DON KEMBER RICKY HARMS ANNA EDWARDS MICHAEL PRESTON JOE RICE
DIRECTORS OF PROGRAMMING WILLIAM BURDON AND MARISH IHRANI DIRECTOR OF ANIMATION GAVIN MOORE ART DIRECTOR SAM COATES AND RAVINDER SINGH PRODUCTION DESIGNER SIMON WOOD
WRITER BY BRENDAN McNAMARA AND KATE ELLWOOD ORIGINAL SCORE ANDREW HALE GAME DESIGN CHUN WAH KONG DIRECTED BY BRENDAN McNAMARA



Blood
Drug Reference
Strong Language
Strong Sexual Content
Violence

PlayStation 2



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.

play from a book, you wouldn't have the audience all over in a theater,

read them a book, and say, 'Start reading,'" says Neil Young, executive producer of EA's *Lord of the Rings* franchise at EA. "The same principle applies to movies being made into games. We have to adapt the film in a way that allows for great gameplay." Eventually, Young hopes movie games will be seen as a form of adaptation on par with how great books are turned into Oscar-winning films. "No one looks at the *Godfather* film and says, 'Oh, it's just an attempt to cash in on the book.'"

Over time, movie games may lean into more than straight adaptations. At their best, these games may give room for film avenues to expand and persist long after the credits roll. This summer's *The Risk*, for instance, tells a unique story set a year after events depicted in the film. And *Enter the Matrix* features its own story line that runs parallel to *The Matrix Reloaded*. "All our research showed players don't just want to replay the movie story," explains John Henkel, Activision's director of global



■ **Bulletproof punk** Even if *Enter the Matrix*'s gameplay doesn't make you go, "oh my," (read our review next month), you'll still need to play it to get the whole *Matrix* story.

brand management. For developers, the challenge becomes building a game that maintains consistency with the film universe but also includes fresh new elements. "For *Spider-Man*, gamers expect to be able to swing on webs and crawl up walls while taking arch-villains, not racing go-carts," says Henkel. *Star Wars Super Battle* Racing, can we get a witness?

These new movie games also serve as a sneak preview of where videogames may go

next—as star-powered vehicles that aren't adapted from a film. French actor Jean Reno recently agreed to lend his likeness to Capcom's *Onimusha 3*. And this fall, Jet Li is starring in Sony's *Way to Honor* (To be fair, let's not forget the lookalike Bruce Willis PSI title *Apocalypse*, which showed that even the biggest stars can't save a subpar game.) Peavy thinks we may soon see an influx of Hollywood stars going digital. "Once we announced [*Enter the Matrix*], I

have asked movie stars if they would be willing to work with us at this level," he says. "Where they used to answer, 'Talk to my agent,' now they say 'Absolutely!'"

Could Tom Cruise star in *Motor Gear Soldier* creator Heico Kojima's next game? Could J. Lo show skin in *Dead or Alive: Extreme Bouncing Beauty* sports? E.T., you'd better phone home with the news: The curse of the movie game may finally be over. **A-**
—Geoff Kightley

coming attractions

ADVANCED SCREENING OF THE REST OF THE YEAR'S MOVIE GAMES

- PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube
FINDING NEMO
- THQ
- Movie & Game: Out now



William Baltis recorded dialogue for last year's *Spider-Man* game. Now he repeats the favor for this kiddie game based on Pixar's latest animated film. We've got all his demographics covered, except the preschool crowd.

- PlayStation 2, GameCube
CHARLIE'S ANGELS
- ubi Soft
- Movie: June ■ Game: July



Conner, Lucy, and Drew lease their blossoms to this action game based on the film franchise. Throw in a three-way outfight and we're so there.

- PlayStation 2
CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON
- ubi Soft
- Movie: Out now ■ Game: August



Based on Ang Lee's art-house chop-choy flick, this game even has Mandarin dialogue with English subtitles to keep up the arty foreign-film look. Seriously.

- Xbox
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
- Bethesda
- Movie: July ■ Game: Summer



Keep your hands and arms inside the vehicle at all times in this hotly high-seas RPG packed with plundering opportunities. Rated "Xm" for gory.

- PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube
THE ITALIAN JOB
- Eidos
- Movie: Out now ■ Game: June



Try to keep with us: The *Italian Job* is a Mini Cooper-racing game based on the new Mark Wahlberg remake of the Michael Caine original, making it a high-gloss version of the PS1 budget driving title from two years ago. Whoo.

- PlayStation 2, Xbox
BAD BOYS II
- Empire
- Movie: July ■ Game: Fall

Martin Lawrence and Will Smith lead their talents to this third-person action-shooter. We're hoping the line "Don't hate the player—hate the game" from the movie trailer isn't literally true.

- PlayStation 2, Xbox
BULLETPROOF MONK
- Empire
- Movie: Out now ■ Game: Fall

This third-person action-adventure

expands on the plot of the recent film starring Steve Wilcox Smith and Chew Yin-Pai. It also includes a bottle-neck multiplayer mode...with Tibetan monks. The film was a mess, which makes us wonder if we really need a game that mixes *Stiffer* with *The Matrix*.

- PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube
HAUNTED MANSION
- THQ Interactive
- Movie: Fall ■ Game: October



The game's set inside Disney's *Haunted Mansion* ride—which is about to become a movie—and stars Eddie Murphy. You can't scare us, Eddie. We've already seen *Pluto Nash*.

- PlayStation 2, Xbox
THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS
- VU Games
- Movie: Out now ■ Game: Fall

Take part in street racing with customizable cars. The primary objective: Avoid getting caught by Johnny Law. The secondary objective: try to understand one word Vin Diesel says.

EGM INTERNATIONAL

Two European games that don't involve soccer



I AIN'T AFRAID OF NO GHOST

Important safety tip: Do not cross the streams in PS2 import Ghost Hunter. Cambridge Studio, maker of the recent PS2 macabre actioner *Phantasy Star*, is finishing up another occult-themed game—*Ghost Hunter* in it, you play a cop-turned-ghost buster who the developers describe as a mix of Bruce Willis, Will Smith, and Brad Pitt. So, a pretty average guy.

If *Phantasy*'s sexy visuals are any indication, *Hunter*'s graphics should impress, but it's the way you fight the ghosts that has us intrigued. First, you have to clobber them with a special weapon that will anchor 'em to our world, and then you can unload with one of your conventional guns. If that's too much work, you can use weepies like a ghost leech to latch on and drain a spook's energy. *Ghost Hunter* isn't listed on Sony's North American release schedule. Yet.



APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION

The Destruction Derby series gets more...uh, destructive.

Race, wreck, or mix the two in Sony Europe's upcoming PS2 car crusher, *Destruction Derby Annies*—and do it all online with up to 15 friends. Not only can you bang off and beat other cars, *DDA* also adds weapon and health power-ups, making this more like a traditional kart racer. Besides all the regular smashin', players can enjoy other competitive modes like a hot-potato game called Pass De Bomb.

Taking all that destruction online (with voice support via a SDCOM or third-party headset) is definitely what has us most interested in the new *Derby*. Hopefully, a publisher will pick it up for the United States after it debuts in Europe late this year.

OVERHEARD

"Ratchet's hands truly scare me. There's something about Ratchet with those huge rubber gloves raising around that drives me absolutely batty."

—Ratchet's Big 'n' Sexy
Jason Rubin pulls out of *Phantasy Star* developer *Dimensional*'s game, *Ratchet & Clank*



"Jak to me was some kind of mutant elf with really bad taste in clothes."

—Jak's Best Pal

"The story is already completed. The problem is that we have not decided whether or not to move forward with designing the game yet. If there's a demand for it, we'd love to make it, but it is undecided."

—Lead Story game designer for *Sonic Heroes*, *Sonic Pinball*, and the possibility of *Sonic III*

L'I' PREVIEWS: A FIRST LOOK AT JUST-ANNOUNCED GAMES

■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

SPAWN

■ Release Date: Winter 2003

The previous *Spawn* games haven't been too hot. All right, they've been awful. (Almost as bad as the movie. Almost.) But that's not helping Namco from trying again with a new action/adventure title that promises to utilize all of

Spawn's powers. Your safest bet still might be to play as him in the Xbox version of *Soul Collector 2*.



■ Game Boy Advance

SONIC BATTLE

■ Release Date: Early 2004

Nothing says friendship like beating the hell out of your pals. At least that's the impression *Sonic Battle* gives us, as its cast members trade nuzzing and jumping for punching and kicking. You and three friends can link your GBAs for team battles, in which you can chain special attacks together. Hey, sounds better than those *Happy Meal* Sonic games at least.



■ GameCube

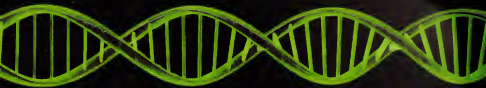
PHANTASY STAR ONLINE EPISODE III: C.A.R.O. REVOLUTION

■ Release Date: Early 2004

The next PS2 focuses on turn-based strategic combat using clickable cards, online or off. Sound strange? Maybe a little too *Pokemon*? We're just happy to be returning to *Ragdol*, really. But *Sonic* fans, this doesn't let you off the hook—we still want a proper PS2 sequel.



UNLEASH THE FURY



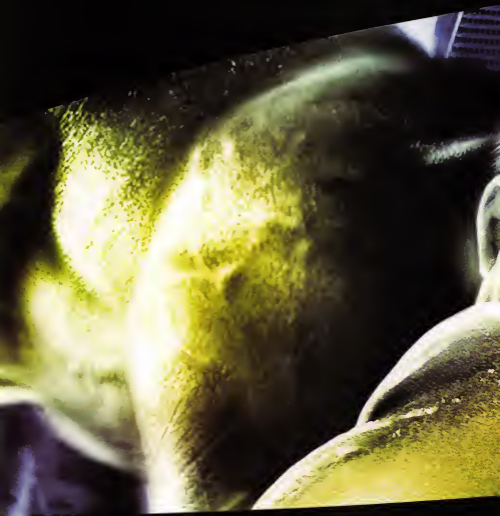


HULK™

Following the events of the blockbuster Universal Pictures film, troubled scientist Dr. Bruce Banner and his enraged alter ego, **The Hulk**, battle The Leader – a terrifying villain intent on unleashing a relentless army of gamma creatures on the world. Unravel The Leader's evil plan by using the brains of Banner, and unleashing the ultimate power and destruction of The Hulk.

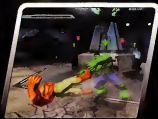


SEE THE MOVIE
IN
THEATERS
06.20.03





Fight up to 10 enemies at once.



Beleaze notorious classic villains and massive new foes.



Outsmart your enemies as Dr. Bruce Banner, using stealth and disguise.





15 devastating attacks to dispose of your enemies.



25 fully destructible and interactive environments.



If you can see it, you can smash it.



PlayStation 2



GAME BOY ADVANCE



PC
CD-ROM
GAMEBOY

"THE INCREDIBLE HULK" and "THE HULK" characters owned © 2003 Universal Studios, Inc. Marvel, "THE INCREDIBLE HULK" and all related comic book characters, TM & © 2003 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. www.marvel.com in the U.S. and/or other countries. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. TM, ®. Game Boy Advance and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. Microsoft, Xbox,

RENTER'S MARKET

Online outlets can save frequent game-renters time and money

Summer is upon us, and you know what that means: It's finally time to catch up on all those great games from last Christmas! (You didn't really think we were gonna say something about going outside or sunlight or something, did ya? And what better—and

cheaper—way to do that than through online game-rental outlets? Like Netflix.com does with DVD movies, these cyberislands let you keep games for as long as you want with no due dates or late fees—just a flat monthly rate. When you're done, slip the game into the postage-paid

envelope it came with and send it back. Once your vendor of choice receives your package, it'll send out the next game you've requested. Sound simple? It is. The only hard part is choosing that vendor of choice. That's why we tested five different outlets by ordering one in-season, one

not-so-popular, and one downright niche title from each. Oh, and we threw in your friendly neighborhood Blockbuster Video just for the sake of comparison.

Prices and shipping times may vary, this highly unscientific poll was taken in March, in Los Angeles. **A+** —Jon M. Gibson



	GAMEFLY www.gamefly.com	GAMELENDER www.gameleader.com	GOVOJO www.govoj.com	REDDOCTANE www.reddoctane.com	VEEGEEZ www.keegooz.com	YOUR LOCAL BLOCKBUSTER VIDEO
PRICING	\$12.95/month for one rental at a time; \$21.95 for two	\$17.99/month for two rentals; \$21.99 for three; \$26.99 for five; (save \$24 with a year commitment)	\$12.95/month for one rental; \$19.95 for two; \$26.95 for three; \$34.95 for four	\$18.95/month for two rentals; \$23.95 for three; \$38.95 for five (maximum)	\$18.95/month for two rentals; \$24.95 for three; \$29.95 for four; \$34.95 for five; \$39.95 for six	\$6 each for 7 days, late fee is \$8.99 for every week thereafter; 9 games max
PERKS	Rent-to-buy option, offering discounted rates on games you'd rather keep for your collection; online game instructions; free 10-day trial membership; new-release reservations; e-mail and 800-number customer-service	Huge selection (5,000+ games including PS1, Dreamcast, N64, and GBAL); cheaper with one-year commitment; reservations for new releases; retro splendor with NES, SMS, and Sega Genesis rentals available soon; e-mail and 800-number customer-service	Free 10-day trial; large handheld rental catalog; new-release reservations; GBAL referral	Trade-in program for website credit; accessory store; stock PS1; Dreamcast, and over 500 Japanese imports; decent selection of used games; live online, e-mail, or 800-number customer service; easy-to-navigate website; new-release reservations	PS1 games, instructions e-mailed directly to you; tells how many customers are already waiting for each game; new-release reservations; e-mail and 800-number customer-service	Instant gratification; PS1 games; get to hear forced pretegs from staff
PITFALLS	Rental tier is limited, with a maximum of just two games at one time	Sloppy website interface, ghetto packaging, no used-game purchase plan	They're either too popular or have too few games—nothing ever showed up in our mailbox, even after two weeks.	Extremely slow shipments	Graphically inept website	Late fees, no instruction booklets; selection can be limited, especially for niche titles; no reservations
TIME LAPSE	GTA: VICE CITY 6 days PANZER DRAGON ORTA 2 days CUBIVORE 2 days	GTA: VICE CITY 3 days PANZER DRAGON ORTA 2 days CUBIVORE 3 days	GTA: VICE CITY Never Arrived PANZER DRAGON ORTA Never Arrived CUBIVORE Never Arrived	GTA: VICE CITY 5 days PANZER DRAGON ORTA Never Arrived CUBIVORE Never Arrived	GTA: VICE CITY 2 days PANZER DRAGON ORTA 4 days CUBIVORE 2 days	GTA: VICE CITY 20 min. (19 spinning to dead) PANZER DRAGON ORTA 20 min. (17 if you double-park) CUBIVORE: Not at local store
THE VERDICT	While its catalog may lack vintage offerings like Dreamcast and PS1 games, GameFly gives customers the all-important "Keep It" option, has an easy-to-steer website with editorial content, mails out games in sturdy packaging, and ships swifly fast. If you're into older games or want to rent more than two at a time, Gameleader is the way to go.					

■ Our mass-market (GTA:VC), somewhat popular (PDR), and niche (Cubivore) test subjects.

GAMING BEAUTY

Although hardly your typical console owner (after all, she sports a bubbly personality, a cheeky demeanor, and breasts), actress and former *Playboy* model Angelica Bridges still finds time for the odd round of *Mad Skills Golf*. Now that her stint on *Baywatch* and *World's Wildest Outquest* (the short-lived TV series that too people in the world watched) have wrapped, you can catch her as the absolute hottest babe in 3DO's *Street Racing Syndicate*.

EGM: Do girls just wanna have fun?
Angelica Bridges: Yeah. We're not into stress or drama.

EGM: So why don't more women play the videogames?

AB: There's something in our brain that guys don't have. It starts at birth. Our parents raise us like we're porcelain and will break. Picking spacships or shooting aliens doesn't translate into the real-set.

EGM: Perhaps you could recommend some titles that'd get a girl in the mood for "Force Feedback"?

AB: The best thing is, most games are competitive. That's not a turn-on. Maybe *Super Mario Sunshine* or *My Pac-Man*—that's a favorite. If a guy sat and played that with me, it'd be a huge aphrodisiac.

EGM: And if a gamer cleans up the old pizza boxes and Zelig toys? That's like a double-mega-aphrodisiac, right? 'Cause if not, we just wasted five minutes.

AB: Oh yeah. Maybe sure the apartment is nice and big? Guys, there better not be any sweaty socks, crumbs, or empty beer cans lying around.

EGM: Crap, that's a lot of work to do on a regular basis. Couldn't we just pick up a chick in an arcade?

AB: Absolutely. If she's there, she automatically has something in common with you. That's the ultimate loveboon.

EGM: Would you date an out-of-the-closet hardcore gamer?

AB: Some girls would. Me, I'm afraid I never get any attention. Trying to pry you guys out of *Altered Beast* isn't easy.

EGM: Either way, got any hot friends into the hobby?

AB: Not really. As a whole, we're raised to

be girls, not chop heads on *Altered Beast*-style. In grade school I might have, but now? Sorry...

EGM: So what's currently on your playlist, then?

AB: *NHL 2K3* is the top disc for me. You can be a player from any league, start fights, and beat the crap out of guys with the stick.

EGM: Biggest drawback to being a "geek gamer"?

AB: I can't cross all my sweet and pretty while playing. It's like *Tourette's* behind the joystick. I just get frustrated. That reminds me. A hot tip for you guys out there: Always let the girl win. **AB**

Life in the Fast Lane

Respect is the name of the game in *Street Racing Syndicate*, the *Grand Turismo*-style racer out this July for PlayStation 2, Xbox, and GameCube.

To get that respect, you've got to earn it by winning races, amassing a fortune by gambling your cars and cash, and robbing the classy ladies (like Angelica here) who hang out in the racetracks. 3DO says that these "gals/trucks" are for more than just show; they'll provide you with info on races, cars, and other drivers—and they can also be (grrr) added to the stakes when you wager.



SEIZE THE GAME

Four retro wares put the past in your palm



Mattel Handheld Football

■ Model ■ \$15

What it is: A reissue of the handheld sports games Baseball and basketball are also available from the 1980s. You remember. It's all about moving the red LED blips across the field while riding across the country in the fairy stationwagon.

Cool factor: ★★★★★

These games serve up competition in its purest form. The chirpy sounds get annoying after a while, but it's a small price to pay for the ultimate in retro play.

Dark factor: ★☆☆☆☆
You'll be the envy of every old-school gamer in town.



Atari Classics 10-in-1 TV Games

■ JAMES ■ \$20

What it is: This vintage, battery-powered Atari 2600 controller plugs into the back of any television, letting you play built-in classics like Asteroids, Breakout, Pong, and more.

Cool factor: ★★★★★
Why just BYOB to the party when you can BYOMC (as in Missile Command)?

Dark factor: ★☆☆☆☆
There's a good reason these things used to be called mysticoids—that's particularly evident when you're twiddling the rod in your lap. Try not to get too excited while you're playing Centipede. Save that for, uh...Gawar.



Electronic Handheld Simon

■ HESBO ■ \$13

What it is: A slimmed-down version of the '70s Simon Says-themed game that was a '70s phenomenon. Players try to mimic the flashing lights in sequence. It's a 10-in-1 answer to Dance Dance Revolution.

Cool factor: ★★★★★
Simon's claim to fame is that it was among the first electronic handheld games, although the tiny version is unrecognizable compared to the Technicolor living-pen-sized original.

Dark factor: ★★★★★
Good luck impressing the ladies with your Simon skills now that those damn videogames have rotted your brain.



Ms. Pac-Man Color FX II Classic Arcade Game

■ MGA ■ \$15

What it is: A Liliputan version of the pellet-munching classic coin-op Pac-Man. Missile Cannons and Centipede are also available.

Cool factor: ★★★★★
More idea, poor execution. We doubt these tough-to-see LED graphics would've been state of the art in the Middle Ages.

Dark factor: ★★★★★
The Gey-Glo see-through plastic isn't exactly macho—we've seen marlin Hello Kitty cell-phone covers. Plus, when a real arcade machine, this game can't take a kick when you get pissed.

—David Klabber

CHARTS

TOP 10 BEST-SELLING GAMES OF MARCH 2003

- 1 **The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker** Wii, Nintendo
- 2 **Pokemon Ruby** GBA, Nintendo
- 3 **Pokemon Sapphire** GBA, Nintendo
- 4 **Tombo 3: Wrath of Heaven** PS2, Activision
- 5 **The Gateway** PS2, Sony CEA
- 6 **Def Jam Fight for NY** PS2, EA Gamas
- 7 **Grand Theft Auto: Vice City** PS2, Rockstar
- 8 **Kamekage: Episode 1** PS2, M. Inco
- 9 **Yu-Gi-Oh! The Duelists of the Roses** PS2, Konami
- 10 **MPF Baseball 2003** PS2, EA Sports

TOP 10 GAME RENTALS FOR THE WEEK ENDING 4/25/03

- 1 **Whispering Willows** PS2, EA Gamas
- 2 **Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell** PS2, Ubi Soft
- 3 **Def Jam Fight for NY** PS2, EA Gamas
- 4 **X2: Wolverine's Revenge** PS2, Activision
- 5 **Grand Theft Auto: Vice City** PS2, Rockstar
- 6 **Yu-Gi-Oh! The Duelists of the Roses** PS2, Konami
- 7 **All-Star Baseball 2004** PS2, Jodaine Sports
- 8 **The Gateway** PS2, Sony CEA
- 9 **Dragon Ball Z: Budokai** PS2, Bandai Namco
- 10 **X2: Wolverine's Revenge** Xbox, Activision

L'I PREVIOUS: UPDATES ON UPCOMING GAMES

■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

THE HOBBIT: THE PRELUDE TO THE LORD OF THE RINGS

■ Release Date: September 2003

How did Bilbo Baggins get the One Ring to begin with? It wasn't a riddle. Sierra's action-RPG *The Hobbit* tells the whole story while cooking up an epic side-gold *Lord of the Rings* license in the process.




■ Xbox

OUTLAW VOLLEYBALL: SPIKE OR DIE

■ Release Date: June 2003

You won't find any physics or cinematic cutscenes here, just a Xbox Live-enabled volleyball game where you get to beat up opposing players if they block your spike. And, of course, lots of tiny swears on the female players.





Only in Donkey Kong Country.



Runaway mine carts, blasting barrels and one swimming gorilla.



© 1994, 2000 Nintendo. TM, ® and Game Boy Advance SP are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2005 Nintendo.
Game and Game Boy Advance SP sold separately. www.donkeykongcountry.com

WHERE'S THE PARTY?

PS2 gamers just say no to EverCrack—so far

Ask any PC gamer about *EverQuest* and you'll likely hear scalding tales about how they've played it for four days straight with no sleep. It's a phenomenon that's broken sales records, won awards, and spawned multiple expansion packs, support groups, and even real-life romances. It seemed a safe bet, then, that when *EverQuest Online Adventure* hit PlayStation 2 last February, the console's 50-million-plus owners worldwide would help recast its PC success.

That hasn't happened—at least, not yet—



■ So what if EQM's so-bad-it's-good TV ad has become the best of its message board decrier's jokes? "I'm so proud of the game itself," says EQM Producer Ben Bell. "I'm just so excited that there's an ad."

though it isn't for lack of trying. The game received heavy play in print, TV, and in-store ad campaigns. But its debut was more lamb than lion. "I think [Sony] thought it was going to blow the doors off the place," says a lead buyer for a large retail chain, who asked to remain anonymous. "Up to now, we've sold a respectable number, but [Sony] was expecting to sell that many in the first or second week—not the first three months."

After that quiet start, Sony took drastic steps to bolster lagging sales of *EverQuest II* bundled the title with the PS2 Network Adaptor—free of charge—in hopes of getting those new to online gaming to give the game a shot (and then pay the monthly \$10 basic subscription fee to keep playing). Also, less than two months after its initial release, EQM's standard retail price was reduced from \$39.99 to the value price of \$14.99. Despite these deals, EQM still hasn't been able to break into the list of top 20 best-selling PS2 games. In fact, in its first month, it ranked 32nd on the PS2 sales chart and 46th overall.

But, unlike many games that don't live up to expectations and fade quietly into oblivion, EQM isn't going anywhere—Sony Online Entertainment has no plans to abandon the project. "We're really happy with the way the product has been received," says Ben Bell, producer for EQM. Bell points out that ongoing updates to the game—the trade skill system that allows players to craft unique items, in-world auctions, and other added features—will only improve the experience and lure in more subscribers.

And subscribers are what EQM's busi-



■ One of the many "who's got the biggest sword" contests you may see going on online.

ness model is about. Sony doesn't worry over the fact that the game is now selling at a discounted rate. "That's really not a sign of failure on our part," Bell says. "A big part of our business is game subscriptions—we're really

gaming is now a fact of life," says Bell. "It's only going to grow in popularity."

If you're still hung up on the graphics and gameplay issues that many fault the game for (EQM's review scores ranged from 5.0 to

"We're really happy with the way the product has been received."

—EQM Producer Ben Bell

interested in getting the game out there and also promoting the Network Adaptor."

Bell—and Sony—may have a point. Though the original PC *EverQuest* experienced more explosive growth, that's partly because retail home computers were already equipped with Internet connections. "Online console

7.5), Bell says you won't have much to complain about for long. "The total game experience is bigger than the graphics," he says. "[Not to] anything that the fans does in the future, you're going to see a great improvement in that department." ■

—Jennifer Tass

expanding your horizons, literally

North (EQM's persistent world) gets bigger this October when the first expansion pack, *EverQuest Online Adventure: Frontiers*, comes out. Besides increasing the world's size to 500 virtual square miles (from its current size of around 300), the game will include enhanced character models and armor; a new playable race (Dagres); new items, spells, and creatures to battle; streaming in-game music; and a heightened level cap (now you can get up to level 80). It looks like Sony may also address some complaints: A tutorial, controller

instructions, improved communication and saved options, and in-game customer service are planned (as are, we hope, new TV ads).



EBGAMES™

electronics boutique®

FREE

Nintendo GameCube GAME!
when you purchase a new
Nintendo GameCube Console.*



* Plus FREE
Preview Disc with
Playable Demos!



*Offer valid 5/4/02 - 7/26/02. The free game offer is only valid on the 4 featured boxes. Offer not valid with pre-owned or refurbished GameCube systems. See sales associate for details.

***Choose one of these great games for free!**



#228147-2 \$49.99



#228189-7 \$49.99



#217434-0 \$39.99



#223082-4 \$49.99

CALL 1-800-800-5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU OR VISIT US AT WWW.EBGAMES.COM



ORIGINAL GANGSTER

We have a bad guy play bad-guy games. And he steals our GameCube

You know that movie *Goodfellas*? Yeah, you do. It's based on the life of this guy right here, Henry Hill. He worked for the Mob, took part in the \$6 million Lufthansa heist in '78 (the biggest ever at the time), then turned state's evidence and helped put away the Lucchese crime family. We thought the guy who lived *Grand Theft Auto* back in the '60s and '70s should play it, so we called for a sit-down and brought in *GTA: Vice City*, *Hitmen 2*, *The Getaway*, and, for the hell of it, *Animal Crossing*. Along for the meeting: Julian, Hill's 14-year-old son and videogame connoisseur.





PlayStation 2
**GRAND THEFT AUTO:
VICE CITY**

EGM: Here's the opening sequence.
Henry HB: Very good. Very funny.
EGM: Here's the cracked lawyer.
HB: Ee-eh there, don't that. [laughs]
EGM: OK, now press Triangle, jump in that car.
HB: I want that Lincoln! Where the—where'd he go?
Julian HB: Press Triangle!
HB: I am. Everyone's watching me f*** this up here! I never played one of those....
JB: You're not supposed to hit everything, Henry. You're supposed to avoid it. You're driving like in real life.
EGM: You're gonna get a DUI, Henry. Go up to that guy. Now hit him.
HB: Julian, help! I feel like such a retard! My brain doesn't fire the way those Maf's brains do.
JB: Follow the cop. The pink dot. Follow the pink dot.
HB: What pink...oh, that thing. First of all, that's purple.
JB: Whatever, just follow—
HB: Show me where the money is. I'll get the money. OK, I'm in South Beach.
JB: They got money, Henry. Hit 'em! Go up and punch 'em!
HB: Wait, the girl on the roller skates, I want her! Where'd she go?
JB: Don't worry about that—hit the guy. Use the gun! Press Circle. [Henry shoots some Vice City denizens before the cops arrive and makes the coffee.]
JB: Bustred!
HB: Yeah? You just lost your college fund, Julian.



PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube
**HITMAN 2:
SILENT ASSASSIN**

HB: What's that? Italy? Yeah, I'm half Sicilian. That's where I learned to cook, from my mother. The other half's Irish. That's where I learned to drink.
JB: You're not supposed to drink.
EGM: OK, we're in Sicily. Your character's a gardener. And a hit man.
HB: I like that. I want those tomatoes.
EGM: Bees to Sicily much?
HB: I was over there a bunch of times. I had to testify. What kinds hit men is this? Wait, he's going to confession? Like he supposed to be fun?
EGM: He's got a conscience.
HB: Those Sicilian hit men have no conscience. Mine a f***ing doozie. I'm talking you. He called 'em zips. They zip in, they zip out. So I'm supposed to what, here?
JB: Go in the gate. Now hit that guard.
EGM: I think that's the malinae.
JB: Hit the malinae!
HB: The malinae? I'm trying!
JB: Henry, you're not—
HB: I'm running all over the place. Screw this. Only reason I go to Sicily is to get tomatoes.



PlayStation 2
THE GETAWAY

HB: What's this, English gangsters? What the f*** are they saying? And why's that guy so ugly? Like his face got caught in the sausage machine.
EGM: OK, that aside, how do you like it so far?
HB: This is like that other stupid one—I'm cycling all over again. How do you drive? Ah, s***, wrong side of the street! Bad enough I gotta learn this complicated apparatus—
JB: It's a controller—
HB: It's a torture device. Look at these f***ing buttons—where am I going? What the f***? We're in Brooklyn!
JB: It's London.
HB: I know. Let's kill some guys. Can I kill a cop? The Duran, is she dead? Somebody...
JB: You have to follow the mission.
HB: There's too much traffic. This is like the freeway—why would I wanna do that at home?
JB: Finish the mission!
HB: Julian, I can't even get in this car. How am I gonna finish anything, here? This game sucks. I'm gonna go have a smoke break.



What's this, English gangsters? What the f* are they saying?**
—behind gangster Henry HB



GameCube
ANIMAL CROSSING

HB: What kind of...what sex are those things? What is this, X-rated? Oooh! Good lord! Where is this? This is up in Puaaywinn, right? Look! It's fishing!
JB: Hey, there's a fish! Read the other way!
HB: No, it's coming from here.
EGM: Garrett's running this way, it's swimming upstream. Probably spawning. They get pregnant, they run away. Wish they all did that. Ah, I don't wanna catch a pregnant fish. But I do want this game!
JB: We can rest it, Dad.
HB: I'm not resting that I'd be too interested... gonna talk to this walrus, here. Ah, f*** it. I like this music. Nice.
JB: This game's for little girls.
HB: I will master this "ficken" game! I gotta live this home.
JB: Henry, it belongs to EGM.
HB: Bill me for it. Call San Francisco [EGM's home office]. I want this.
JB: It's for little girls, Dad!
HB: Girls, boys, whatever. Hey, I never had a childhood. Growing up with Paulie [former mob boss Paul Valio], you don't have a childhood. My childhood was taking a Makolov and throwing it through a window.
JB: You played games, Dad.
HB: If I didn't have dice, cards, or plectro, I never played it.
EGM: So you'd never played a videogame before today?
HB: The only one I played was Rong.
EGM: Uh...Rong?
HB: Rong, yeah.
JB: It's Pong, not Rong.
HB: This animal thing here, this is the longest I've ever been attached to a game. Julian, I could play this with your mother. Give us something in common. Besides sex.
JB: Oh, God. Can we go now? He



—Alex Porter



Ha, it's not the world's finest robot parade—the red mech stole the flag in MechMosaic's downloadable CTF mode.

ONLINE THIS MONTH

Squeeze more assault out of your mech



Get your mech-piloting suit back on—Microsoft has just added a second batch of Xbox Live downloadable extras for MechMosaic that will make destroying your friends even more enjoyable.

The biggest addition is a Capture the Flag (CTF) mode, plus two new maps—Desert Storm and Midtown.

Mayhem—to try it in, if you've played a first-person shooter online in the last two years, you already know how CTF works. Two teams, two bases, two flags; steal the opposing team's head-quarters, steal their flag, bring it back to yours, plant, repeat. (But that's not all. Two new

mechs, Loki and Hellbringer, are also newly available. These smaller-looking behemoths have slightly different characteristics (the "bringer jumps, Loki dodges") and weapons (Hellbringer packs a flamethrower, autocannon, and Javelin long-range missile battery; Loki has a pulse laser, autocannon, and Crossbow short-range missile). Let the robot-on-robot carnage commence.

On egmmag.com

Log on to our website and keep up with the Belmonts via full interviews with the *Castlevania* team and an extensive history of the series.

What, you want more? OK, you can also read all the extra stuff from our Henry Hill interview we couldn't fit into the print version on page 56. Expanded online reads! And if you're really, really hardcore into *The Sims*, check out our recent *Afterthoughts*. Plus, we've got interviews for ya with the designers of *Legacy of Kain: Defiance* (PS2, Xbox), *SSX 2* (PS2, Xbox, GC), and *Counter Strike* (Xbox).

must-hit websites



www.4k.com—Looking for the sum of that one arcade game you used to play? Maybe the one where you jumped cars off the road and jumped really high over water? And all you remember is it started with "S"? Go to the Killer List of Videogames (KLOV) and look it up. Ah—here, it is, jump 'N' Jump.



www.gametricks.com—If you're stuck in a game and don't know where to turn, point your browser to this handy site. Here, you'll find game-specific walkthroughs and tips for the latest games, plus hardware upgrade boards for any other questions (just how to get the *Vortex* suit in *GDQ Volleyball*).



www.gametricks.com—Looking for an update on a game? Surf on over to Gametricks, a depository of review scores from websites and magazines for thousands of titles with links to the full text (if available). Definitely a handy resource if you want to know which *Castlevania* is the best.

PC GAMING UPDATE

The big news happening on that "other" platform



Grand Theft Auto: Vice City is finally coming to PC, and guess what? It's pretty much the exact same game you've been playing the last bajillion months or so! Oh, yeah, it'll have sharper graphics and mouse control, and it will let you play your own MP3s (finally! A place for your entire *Guns Tiger* collection). It'll be big on PC, just like it is on PS2, but you know what, who really cares? Yeah, sharp, to-die-for. This is *sooo* not the big news for the PC.

No, the big deal is that *Half-Life 2* will be out by Christmas. The sequel to the biggest PC game of the last five-plus years, *Half-Life 2* looks even better than the first game, with a state-of-the-art engine that trumps the more Hollywood *Doom 3* code and features killer artificial intelligence and character animation. Barring a catastrophe, this will be the best game of the year on PC and exactly the sort of game—a first-person shooter—that the PC does better than any console. Yes, the overly praised *Nero* will join *Vice City* in finally jumping to PC this year—sharper graphics, mouse control, yadda yadda—but *Half-Life 2* is going to be the Lord King God of PC gaming for this year and the next.

—Robert Coffey
Computer Gaming World



PC gamers will once again be the great beneficiaries of *Half-Life 2*.



RESIDENT EVIL® DEAD AIM

Face your gravest fears in an all-new, nightmarish first-person action-shooter adventure for your PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system. Encounter a new level of horror as you battle flesh devouring zombies and murderous mutants to regain control of a sea-jacked cruise ship lost in the Atlantic.



Intense blend of action, puzzle solving and DEAD-AIM graphics

UPGRADE your weapons as you progress through the game

Supports GUNCON 2 light gun and DUALSHOCK 2 controls



CAPCOM
capcom.com

PlayStation 2



GUNCON 2



© CAPCOM CO., LTD., 2004. © CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 2004. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. CAPCOM, the CAPCOM logo and RESIDENT EVIL are registered trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD. RESIDENT EVIL is a registered trademark of CAPCOM CO., LTD. Guncon™ 2 & GUNCON 2 are trademarks of the Gun-Con Association. The Gun-Con logo is a registered trademark of the International Digital Software Association. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo and DUALSHOCK are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

THE RUMOR MILL

Gossip that walks 'n' talks

q-mann



GAME ON

Welcome friends, your maestro of gaming's hottest gossip has returned to conduct his monthly symphony of scuttlebutt. This installment's rondo is especially tender and finely aged, its flavor emerging like a just-hatched butterfly from its cocoon...or something. Let's get it on! And if you feel like dropping me a line, send it to quartermaster@ziffdavis.com. See you in another 30....

—The Q



Samurai Hayabusa and pal from *Bleach*

bits of q



SNK Back in the Saddle
Hateful SNK, purveyors of arcade fighting games apace, has returned to the U.S. after three years in the wilderness. It has a new Statewide subsidiary all set to release titles like *Metal Slug Advance* and *The King of Fighters 2007* later this year. Here we dream of a new *Card Fighter's Clash*?



Pokémon Lite
Pokémon Box Ruby/Sapphire isn't a real Pokémon game for GameCube, but it's as close as you'll get right now. Box is actually just a glorified Pokédex, allowing you to store your monsters on a GameCube memory card and check out their stats. It's out in Japan now; expect U.S. release info soon.



Lapis Lazuli PS2 Spotlight
If you got hooked on *Lapis Lazuli* during its run on Cartoon Network's Adult Swim, you'll no doubt be happy to hear there's more of the osseous 'thief coming your way—in game form. This fall, you'll be able to snook, steal, and oggle gal-pal Fujiko on PlayStation 2, courtesy of Banai.



NEWS BITS

Web-slinger for hire

The Q's spin here that the next Spider-Man title from Activision will take a cue from the free-roaming gameplay of *Grand Theft Auto* and allow you to wander the crime-ridden streets, going wherever your web-slinging takes you. Tinging yet?

Merger talk part XXVI

How about we just say in five years there'll be one software publisher and leave it at that, eh? No? Ah well...the most recent rumors of consolidation (depending on who you believe) have Namco and Sega merging, or Microsoft buying Sega, or EA buying Sega, or everyone buying everyone. Stop the train, I wanna get off....

New Pilotwings

Speculation abounds that a new installment of Nintendo's arcade-style flight simulator *Pilotwings* is coming to the DS. Word has it the as-of-yet-unnamed developer is *Star Wars Rogue Squadron* maker Factor 5, though by the time you read this, the cat may already be outta the bag. Hey, don't yell at me, my fingers are Egin' on the column weeks before E3 goes down in the City of Angels. Would someone please hurry up and invent a helipathy machine already?



■ **Evil movie sequel**—A sequel to the *Resident Evil* movie begins filming this fall. It couldn't possibly be as bad as the first one, could it?

■ **Chinese PS2 release pushed back**—Gamers in China will have to wait till later this year to get their hands on an official Chinese PS2, as the government there is unsure whether to classify it as an entertainment device or high technology.

■ **Sony combines PS2 chips**—In a move to save on production costs, Sony has found a way to combine the two main chips inside every PS2—the Emotion Engine and Graphics Synthesizer—into one.

SEPARATED AT BIRTH



■ **Mission 2's silent assassin, known only as Agent 47**



■ **Democratic spokesman James Cavill, aka the "Lapis" Caves**

MIDWAY



IT'S TIME TO GET YOUR FREAK ON

Explore, dogfight and race with some of the most freaky characters you have ever played with, in the first-and-only, fully-open, interactive, 3-D, racing videogame.

- 13 alluring characters and dozens more hidden
- 12 massive and enticing tracks
- Enthralling race and dog fight modes
- Unique and mesmerizing mini games
- Amazing head-to-head multiplayer action



FREAKY FLYERS

Get your interactive freak on at the amazing Freaky Flyers website. Log onto www.freakyflyers.com




PlayStation 2



THE HOT FIVE

Where your votes tell us what to write about

Vote for your most-anticipated games each month between the 1st and the 15th at www.gamesradar.com.



1

- Xbox
- Publisher: Microsoft
- Genre: Action
- Release: Early 2004

Well, you wait for HD, you need to see *Red vs. Blue's Blood Gulch Chronicles* (www.rvblu.com), a series of witty Halo-themed parodies set during a supposed post-Halo civil war.

An excerpt from Episode 3, The Rookies: "You know what? Forget what I said before. We can definitely pick up chicks in this [junk]. Probably two or three chicks apiece." "What are you going to do with two chicks?" "Brosnan are like *Waters*. The more you can hook up, the better it gets."



2

- GameCube
- Publisher: Nintendo
- Genre: RPG
- Release Date: Winter 2004

Big, bad news since last month: *Crystal* has been delayed (from spring to summer in Japan, fall to winter in America), and the online battle system is being overhauled. A highly anticipated GameCube game delayed at the last minute? Who would have guessed? Another potential buzzkill: The guy behind *Sevens's* supremely un-fun *Advanced Soldiers* is retooling *Crystal*. We're going to keep an open mind...but it had better not suck, Mr. Kawasumi.





■ *Crystal* has four-player *Sanctimonious* play

3

- PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube
- Publisher: Namco
- Genre: Fighting
- Release Date: August 2003

We admit that we've probably been spending way too much time lately with the *SCP* sport, but we think the backgrounds in Namco's *Soul* series of fighters are some of the best in the genre. While its company has yet managed to beat *Street Fighter*'s best stages, in accord of their *Kochikostyle* factor, a few *Soul* actives come close.

- Real-life
- In-game
- Real-life
- In-game






THE THAI/CAMBODIA STAGE: Based on Thailand's Grand Palace (pictured), and Cambodia's Angkor Wat temple appears elsewhere in the background. Even better than *32X's* workmanlike Thailand stages.

THE JAPANESE PALACE STAGE: In the original *Soul Calibur*, Namco based Mitsurugi's stage on the real Takamatsu Castle, a water castle in Japan. It's not Ryu's, but it is damn cool.



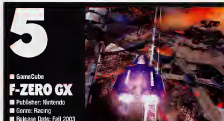
4

- PlayStation 2
- Publisher: Square Enix
- Genre: RPG
- Release: D. for November 2003

We know you want it. We want it. Everybody wants it. Just remember: Square's upcoming RPG—the first ever direct sequel—is *Final Fantasy X* with the biggest in-game cut of the *Charlie's Angels* movie. And its effects are already visible in the capy commensurate of recent periods in *Sae Francisco*, we spotted two different, rather rotund girls dressed as the hell-pants-clad Yara from this sound-up sequel. *PowerUp*.

5

- GameCube
- Publisher: Nintendo
- Genre: Racing
- Release Date: Fall 2003



On one hand, *F-Zero GX*'s a no-brainer. First. Looks slicked. Made by Yoshihiro Nishino, Sega's *Daytime USA* designer. But hey, wasn't Super Nintendo's *F-Zero* something more than just speed and huge jumps? Isn't that why it hooked us? Ah, screw the old days, just bring on the giant R.O.B. robots and cruise ships (I've seen in recent shots).



How many colleges have
their own landing strip?

See the world, earn credit for college and experience adventure you just can't find on any other campus. To learn more, log on the Life Accelerator[™] at navy.com or call 1-800-USA-NAVY.

NAVY
accelerate your life.

COMING SOON

Want to know what games are on the way? (Just nod your head)



JUNE

Aliens vs. Predator: Extinction (Strategy) PS2, Xbox
After this, a *Friday* vs. *Jason* online RPG would only be a slight surprise.

Dragon Ball Z: Legacy of Goku II (RPG) GBA
Super Saiyans seem more like LPS delivery guys in this DBZ follow-up.

Donkey Kong Country (Action) GBA
DK was once king of the consoles, but you won't go ape over his handheld comeback.

Freestyle Metal X (Sports) Xbox, GC
Dare into a motor—and McBird—come as three iso-crack-ugly covers.

GI Joe: The Snake Game (Action) PS2, Xbox, GC
With 6,000 boxes and adjustable mouth bits, it's *GI Joe* for country clubbers.

The Italian Job (Racing) PS2, Xbox, GC
"The game definitely embodies the spirit of the movie," says F. Gary Gray, the director of this summer's high-octane heist flick.



(Racing) Lock what happens when you crash their ride with booby traps and a recorder...

Mace Griffin's Bounty Hunter (Action) PS2, Xbox, GC
First-person shootouts and space dogfights are a stellar idea, but it's running so late.

Midnight Club II (Racing) Xbox
The Xbox version of Rockstar's street racer gets better visuals and voice-chat support.

Midtown Madness 3 (Racing) Xbox
Start as a delivery driver protecting precious cargo and rise to the rank of special agent.

Outlaw Volleyball (Sports) Xbox
Guaranteed to cut-kill Tecmo's *Dead or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball*.

P.R.O.G (Action) GC
Hesitant Vanessa Schneider dispatches enemies with a high-caliber dance routine.

The Pirates of the Caribbean (Action) Xbox, GBA
Disney's douring its animatronic maniacs in WD-40 for movie and console comebacks.

Resident Evil: Dead Aim (Action) PS2
Swab the droos of a zombie-filled ship with lead in this light-gun shooter.

Rally Championship (Racing) GC
Compete in six international off-road rallies.

Rock N' Roll Racing (Racing) GBA
Ozzy would love this remake of the auto-combat classic, if he could turn on a GBA.

Soldier of Fortune II: Double Helix (Action) Xbox
Featuring hit-specific damage, the sadist's shooter promises unapologetic gore.

Sonic Pinball Party (Pinball) GBA
Use flippers to knock Sonic against floating bumpers and through outcropping ramps.

Stanley & Mitch (Action) PS2, Xbox
With a driving wheel and a light gun, you and a friend will look like dorks playing this.

Street Racing Syndicate (Racing) PS2, Xbox, GC
Use your girlfriend as collateral in the extra-sexy take on underground motorsports.

Unlimited Saga (RPG) PS2
Square's latest RPG is definitely different. It's just that it's different in a lot of bad ways.

Wakeboarding Unleashed Featuring Shaun Murray (Sports) PS2, Xbox
Activision applies the trend-and-boo. Tony Hawk formula to another pseudo-sport.

Wario World (Action) GC
Mario's opportunistic alter ego butt-kicks and butt-nishes bodies to relieve his kot.

JULY

Ape Escape 2 (Platform) PS2
Like the novel original, with more gorillas.

As the Laid: Twilight of the Spirits (RPG) PS2
The latest Arc bashes a bigger story, better graphics, and beefier turn-based battles.

Answer Core 3: Silent Line (Action) PS2
Ageless insists on retooling its mech combat first-aid colossal (but) at a time.

Chaos Legion (Action) PS2
Burgoning death-metal-band name or sharp action/adventure game? You decide.

Dinotopia (Action) Xbox, GC
This prehistoric paradise where man and dinosaurs peacefully co-exist in trouble. Big trouble.

Downhill Domination (Racing) PS2
How developer Inazumi went from *Twisted Metal* to downhill racing is beyond us.

Freaky Flyers (Racing) PS2, Xbox, GC
Look up in the sky! It's a kart-racing game from Midway.

Ice Nine (Action) PS2
This steady-based first-person shooter is so secret it's not even listed on Ben's website.

K-1 World Grand Prix (Action) PS2
Bouts in this squared circle involve more than just fists/cuffs—there's kudo!, too.

Marie Golf (Sports) GC
For! It's a-ha, Mami. Come join his friends and enemies for a round or two on the links.

Red Dead Revolver (Action) PS2
Hopefully, this old west action/adventure will meet its summer release date.

Resonance of the Three Kingdoms VII (Strategy) PS2
Play as up to eight different characters in your quest to unify China. How educating!

Shrek: Sneakin' Around (Action) GBA
Anything that has the word "sneakin'" in its name is bound to stink, right?

Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic (RPG) Xbox
We're guessing that most EGM readers will lean toward the Dark Side of the Force in our number-one most-wanted game of the summer (see page 76).

Tetris Deluxe (Puzzle) Xbox
Want details? It's Tetris... online.

Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon: Island Thunder (Action) Xbox
Unlike the PC version, you don't need the original *Ghost Recon* to enjoy this action.

Warship Ganner (Simulation) PS2
We now have a good reason for yelling, "You've sunk my battleship!" in the office.



Xbox
DRONEZ
Release Date: July

(Action) In the future, all restaurants are Taco Bell and disputes are settled with dinner plates. OK, that's just the vision of the future that the *Deadly Doses* of *Iron-Inspired Dronez* makes us want to see. With no port of *Totem 2.0* (PC) in sight, this is our *Ultimate Fries*.



**WHAT CAN'T BE WORN
OUT OF THE HOUSE
CAN ALWAYS BE SNUCK OUT.**

LOITER AT

EASTPAK

.com

Built to Resist™



TAKE OUT THE COMPETITION. And a mailbox. And three live hydrants. And a mine. And a pedestrian mall. And anything else that gets in your way. Because with *Midtown Madness 3*, you set the course. If grass seems faster, by all means drive on grass. If the sidewalk's to your liking, you definitely have the right of way. Race through Washington, DC, and Paris and leave your impressions on both. **Now, take the next big fi**

Microsoft
GAME STUDIO



Microsoft, the Microsoft Game Studio logo, Midtown Madness 3, Xbox, Xbox Live, and the Xbox logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of the Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. The MM3 Trademark has owned by BMW AG and



Whether you're going to get on with your drive, face off against other Mad, misdeed opponents, and take all the front-year pretty little cars you can get up. Just remember, there's no right way to get there, as long as you get there first.

MIDTOWN MADNESS 3

www.xbox.com/midtownmadness3

We used their license. MIDTOWN MADNESS 3 is a trademark used under license from Ford Motor Company. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. © 2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. The images herein are trademarks of the Interactive Digital Software Association. 02003.01gsm (US) (000000) 02 16

XBOX LIVE ONLINE ENABLED



THE 20 HOTTEST GAMES OF THE SUMMER

We delved through this summer's release calendar and voted for the games that shine the brightest. Now find out which games *EGM*'s editors are most excited to play during this year's hottest months instead of...shiver!...going outside



Illustration by Thomas F. Smith

20

PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube, PS1

MADDEN NFL 2004

Publisher: EA GAMES ■ Developer: EA GAMES ■ Release Date: 09/01/2003

Star '03 NFL 2004's new Playmaker Control feature has us charged, now, you can make offensive and defensive adjustments without flipping off your opponent. And the practically limitless options in *Owner's* mode (like, say, determining the price of the concessions in your stadium) should produce even more playing loops. While PS2 players enjoy online tournaments with up to 32 teams and headset voice-chat support, GameCube owners can access exclusive content through a GBA connection ("Basically what content is still a mystery, but we hear the GBA won't be used as a playbook.")

18

PlayStation 2, Xbox

ALTER ECHO

Publisher: THQ ■ Developer: Gaijin ■ Release Date: August 2003

It looks like somebody has been getting into the hallucinogens over at Outrage Entertainment, but we figure we'll see how the 3D action-adventure game pans out before staging an intervention. Though *Alter Echo's* trippy art style is an immediate attention-grabber, the character-morphing gameplay and time-stopping (literally) combos could end up causing the most confusion. You play as Nevin, a shapeshifter capable of assuming three forms that range from a hulking gun-wielding behemoth to a wall-climbing four-legged creature specializing in stealth kills and general sneaky. The Time Dilation combo system further shakes up traditional action conventions, incorporating music-and-rhythm-game aspects into combat. Expect the unexpected from this one.



■ It's so trippy? Lame, bud. He's got radioactive blood.



19

PlayStation 2, Xbox

BACKYARD WRESTLING:
DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME

Publisher: Eidos ■ Developer: Paradox ■ Release Date: August 2003

In a thousand years, anthropologists may dig up copies of *Backyard Wrestling*, see its insane Clown-in-Insane Clown violence (courtesy of celeb thugs Insane Clown Posse), and know exactly when 21st-century civilization fell apart. But for those of us living in the here and now, it feels like the perfect time for the cheap blue-collar brawl: "Throwing thumbtacks at someone is just fun," says Kevin Gill, *Backyard's* lead designer, describing one of a hundred ways you can turn up the hurt. Arenas are multileveled and crammed with hazards. "When an opponent follows me up a ladder at the slaughterhouse," Gill says, "I can bash him over the head with the coffee machine, then throw him through the window of the upstairs office and watch the office worker wobble on him with a clipboard." Sweet, sweet carnage.



Xbox

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE
II: DOUBLE HELIX

Publisher: Activision ■ Developer: Raven ■ Release Date: June 2003

The Shop, a private anti-terrorism organization, is paying good money to whoever can put the kibosh on some lunatics wielding biological weapons. Mercenary John Mullins takes the job, kugging his down-plus-guns to Prague, Colombia, Hong Kong, and beyond in his realistic first-person shooter. Sold voice acting in multiple languages, no less, gives the adventure the feel of an international spy thriller, and online play via Xbox Live simply sweetens the deal.

17



16
Xbox
MIDTOWN MADNESS 3

Publisher: Microsoft ■ Developer: Digital Illusions ■ Release Date: June 2003

You're a pizza delivery boy, and if you don't get a pie to a group of foreign dignitaries in the next two minutes, it comes out of your paycheck. You never cared much for traffic laws anyway, did you? In Microsoft's first non-PC Midtown Madness game, you get behind the wheel and speed around Paris and Washington, D.C. in a variety of Caesar mode missions (pizza delivery boy, limo driver, paramedic, etc.) and street races in your quest to become the ultimate king of the road. And you can hop online and race against your friends on Xbox Live.

Xbox
TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON: ISLAND THUNDER 14

Publisher: Ubi Soft ■ Developer: Red Storm
Release Date: July 2003

Leave behind Eastern Europe's dreary skies and head for warmer climes. Don't get the wrong idea—Island'll be no R&R, just more S&D (that's "search and destroy," greenhorn). You're headed to post-Castro Cuba, which needs a little help to eliminate its lingering warlords and build a viable democracy.

Unlike the PC expansion pack, this Island Thunder is a standalone game sold at a reduced price (\$39.99). It includes eight single-player missions, plus four maps each from the original Ghost Recon and the Desert Siege PC expansion. Play online in a dozen different multiplayer modes, complete with voice communication—crucial for squad coordination in this realistic military sim. But you know that.



With Castro out of Cuba, you'll be smoking Havana's finest in no time.



Ever since Capcom opened the not-quite-a-sequel floodgates with Street Fighter II: Champion Edition, fighting-game fans have suffered under the yoke of never-ending updates that offer little in more than minor tweaks. Evolution bucks the trend by giving gamers a substantial bang for minimal bucks.

First off, you'll find two new characters here—Goh, a vaguely vampire-looking judo master, and Brad Burns, a slick Italian kickboxer with mad dodging skills. They're both excellent additions to the roster and offer even seasoned players new challenges. The other big addition is the Guest mode, a wildly deep single-player experience that pits you against AI versions of Japan's greatest WWF players. Other improvements include faster loading times, cleaner graphics, tweaked stages, and tons of silly accessories to customize your fighters with. All for the low, low price of \$20.



Below: Goh's chest tattoo reads: "Pick up rolls and eggs. Stop by stacking cubes. Practice katas. Kill Akiba."



13
PlayStation 2, Xbox
MIDNIGHT CLUB II

Publisher: Rockstar ■ Developer: Rockstar ■ Release Date: June 2003

Xbox Live players have been sorely missing an online arcade-style racer, but they'll soon have one of the best with Midnight Club II. Sharper visuals aside, the main advantage this version has over its PlayStation 2 counterpart is chat support—a big deal if trash talking is an integral part of your game plan. The battle for street cred begins in earnest this summer.



Brave souls,
come forth!

Romance VIII of the Three Kingdoms

Bitter Enemies, allied schemes, and War Council directives intertwine in a rich tapestry of intrigue!

- 54 Scenarios plus one fictional story
- Over 600 Commanders plus 100 Officers you create.
- 1 to 8 players, with over 40 different endings
- Forge relationships through new events such as "Marriage" and "Sworn Brother"
- 15 new Tactical skills including "Flaming Arrows," "Surprise Attacks," and "Sorcery"
- Begin the game at any year

PlayStation 2 July 2003

STRENGTH. COURAGE. DESIRE.
"... the best-looking game in the series yet." - ign.com

AVAILABLE NOW

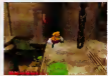
12

GameCube

WARIO WORLD

Publisher: Nintendo | Developer: Treasure
Release Date: June 2003

Nintendo has been oddly quiet about *Wario World*. But now that we've finally gotten to play it ourselves (see Review Crew this issue for the whole story), we're happy to report that developer Treasure (Konami's *Mitchie! Makers* managed to capture the light platforming and offbeat essence of the Game Boy's *Wario Land* series, while injecting its own patented flavor of crazy. What proof? Four words: killer clown cress pie.



He's not a bad man, just ambitious.



PlayStation 2

CHAOS LEGION

Publisher: Capcom | Developer: Capcom | Release Date: July 2003

Capcom combines the genres it's best known for—action, fighting, and role-playing—in *Chaos Legion*, a darker take on *Dynasty Warriors'* screen-filling melees. Inspired by a Japanese novel, *Chaos Legion* begins as standard slasher fare but hooks you with great reworked fantasy-character designs, epicness points, and computer-controlled "legions" to command. What? *Devil May Cry* wasn't cool enough for you?

11

GameCube

MARIO GOLF: TOADSTOOL TOUR

Publisher: Nintendo | Developer: Camelot
Release Date: Fall 2003



10



It's a new gimmick as the green as Mario attempts to drive the ball past a Koopa-Clomp.

It may look like a kids game, what with all the cartoony backgrounds, crazy effects, and club-wielding turtles, but *Mario* actually plays one mean game of golf. Expect a version of the sport with enough nuances for links fans (including weather effects, wind speed, and ball spin), but also easier controls and the friendly *Mario* coat of paint for casual players, plus link-up support for a forthcoming GBA *Mario Golf*.

"Keepe, I want you to kill all the gophers on the golf course."



PlayStation 2, Xbox

WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED

Publisher: Activision 02 | Developer: Shiba | Release Date: June 2003

It has been years since Tony Hawk's *Pro Skater* reinvented radical—now X-games of every niche, from Razor scooter to erotic bike!, have nabbed a piece of the action-sports pie. So you can imagine our surprise when a sport as marginal as rock surfing made a splash around the office.

How'd *Wakeboarding Unleashed* featuring Shaun Murray make this list? Genesis catch-and-release rope mechanics developed in lockstep with levels that maximize use of the maneuver, mainly Apply THPS's inflatable stunt system to a wealth of multiplayer modes and mini-challenges, and you've got cause to care about action sports again.

9

PlayStation 2

TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS

Publisher: Eidos | Developer: Core
Release Date: June 2003 (We'll believe it when we see it.)

If "well-known" meant "beloved," *Lara Croft* would be higher on this list, but too many *Tomb Raider* releases have left us skeptical: What could make this one different? *Angel of Darkness* features plenty of (ahem) curved surfaces, stealth sequences, bodypart power-ups, new moves, and multiple characters—in addition to the series' standard run/jump/climb gameplay. We'll live with the French backdrops. But we're spooked by delays and still wonder how *Lara* will feel... er, control-wise, of course.



Lara's mickler attitude leads her to break the Croft-Warrior once and for all.

8

EB GAMES™

electronics boutique®



\$99.99 EA.

#232180-2 Platinum
#232180-3 Cobalt



#232134-6 \$49.99



\$69.99 EA.

#231718-0 Arctic #231734-5 Indigo
#232458-8 Frost #213385-2 Platinum
#232739-6 Glacier #232823-5 Pokémon Gold

*Colors may vary by store.



#231702-9 \$14.99



#232048-2 \$29.99



#232049-6 \$29.99



#232035-5 \$29.99



#22568-7 \$34.99



#232562-9 \$34.99

CALL 1-800-800-5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU OR VISIT US AT WWW.EBGAMES.COM



It is just as if
were *Heavenly*—only
with *Heavenly* take
in this picture!

PlayStation 2

SILENT HILL 3

Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami Computer Entertainment Tokyo
Release Date: August 2003



Where other frightfests settle for mere scares, *Silent Hill*'s hard-edged horror would rather scar your mind. Indeed, if the second *AH* adventure is on par with a *Final Horror* video, the third's like touring a diseased organ on the tip of an endoscope. (When you squirm through a corridor of charred flesh and pulsating tissue, you'll know precisely what we mean.) Your enemies, too, look like walking autopsies, and even the esoteric puzzles—many of which require you to dispose a low-liver in chemicals in order to oxygenate a fire—reflect the same foul obsession.

As for the plot, we know little other than Hodge's heroic Heathbar's days as a mad scientist done. Konami's hush-hush, but it hints that *SH3*, although not a direct sequel, just might reveal something about the series' overall mythology.



5

PlayStation 2

APE ESCAPE 2

Publisher: Ubi Soft | Developer: Sony Computer Entertainment Japan | Release Date: Summer 2003

We humans think of monkeys as sidekicks: we can dress up as secret agents or baseball players for our amusement. But with access to brain-erasing helmets and a time machine (long story), monkeys often reveal their insatiable thirst for world domination. As in *Ape Escape* (PS1), the superintelligent monkey Specbar and his simian minions will erase humankind from history

unless spiky-haired hero Jimmy captures them.

Luckily, he has a slew of appropriately monkey gadgets for the job. With the slingshot, he hits distant switches or airborne bad guys. A radio-controlled car lets him shepherd monkeys hither and yon or press otherwise-unreachable floor switches. And once he has tracked down the escaped primates, he snags 'em in the Time Net, zapping them back to the present, where their



Game Boy Advance

ADVANCE WARS 2: BLACK HOLE RISING

Publisher: Nintendo | Developer: Intelligent Systems | Release Date: June 2003



When squashed-down army men and cartoon tanks clash, you know you're decidedly not in a world of *z88s*—so it's safe for pocket generals everywhere to check out *Black Hole Rising*, the sequel to Nintendo's hit turn-based strategy game. Just like before, you're out to build armies, take over bases and towns, and wipe the enemy off the face of your GBA. New improvements include an AT-AT-like walking tank, two super-powers per commanding officer (a normal super one and a *uh*, super super one), a greater variety of objectives, and map-specific features (like missile sites you can capture and use).



Advance Wars is the most Japanese-looking series to score some out in Japan.



Like *Shantae* said, "It's a mad house! A mad house!"



thinking caps are confiscated. The right analog stick controls his various gadgets, while the left stick directs Jimmy's movements.

This sequel plays just like the much-acclaimed original, but has improved graphics and level design, more collectibles and minigames, and three all-new gadgets (for a total of 11). Remember: With great monkey-catching power, comes great monkey-clothing responsibility.



Hidden characters, extra weapons and undiscovered worlds are all at your fingertips. Cut out the cards, slip them into the game's case for a quick trick.

When you get the itch, punch in these codes and readily get into the game.

Check out www.getintothegame.com to download a coupon for \$5 off any games on this card. While you're there, get the scoop on all the hottest games and accessories.

NBA STREET VOL. 2



PLAYSTATION 3, XBOX, GAMECUBE

GOT GAME?

Maximize the Clock
With its fast cover-drive, 60 ft. wide defensive screens, if you get to there at less, he go you mean and ready to catch the other right all his fingertips, busting knees on instant blood.

Give the Goal
Goodwin's is set called in NBA Street Vol. 2, so every else is fair game. Do you have a ball player near the rim at all times, as super lights are a sure way to disrupt your opponent, to perform a block, to shoot/rebound with a touch ball, jumping in the path of the ball, it sounds easy, but careful monitoring of your watch meter and next position are required to get the most out of shot-blocking.

Groundwater Motor
Try to watch your gameboard meter as it becomes full when you are in possession of the ball. Doing so will accomplish a couple of things, allowing you the most time to work an open shot or pocket it.



RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN



PLAYSTATION 3, XBOX

HOT TIPS!

Looney
When in an area where you will not be able to see your next level, use your watch's leveling system to find out if you are on a level or not. This is useful for finding out if you are on a level or not. This is useful for finding out if you are on a level or not.

Duck and Cover
Duck and cover is a tactic that involves popping out of cover just long enough to shoot off a few rounds, then retreating to cover. You can do this from any cover (Barraged a corner, behind a tree, bushes, or even behind trees). This is most effective when making enemies, especially if you can be on a level. Do not use this tactic if you are on a level enough to go around your cover. If they charge, stop them before they reach you. When they do close the distance, retreat to other tactics such as over-shooting.



SECRET SKILLS

Duck and Drive:
You can duck and drive in first person by pressing and holding U/L and R/L. This helps you take out enemies while hiding behind objects like barrels.

Rolling Dodge into sneak attack:
When an LED fires at you quickly roll to dodge the laser, and instead of getting up remains in a motionless crouch to improve your accuracy when firing at an enemy.

Short shooting:
When you have small health, shoot each save to have your duck back set to the short hand gun. Throw a better tank at your enemies, quickly duck back to the 4BR, while the tank is in the air to blast the bosses tank out of the box. Note the works best with the 4BR hand gun.

This is a trick up:
This trick is to use the fire extinguisher, and your tank to liberate an LED's from their weapons.



Setting traps for big enemies:
With a three small boss tanks, or one to two large boss tanks, you can set a trap for the next part by setting a trap for the next part by setting a trap for the next part.

Tank and Egg Dash:
When running through a group of LEDs a trap is transparent, provides full view immediately by a tank. Note you can also do this by driving through the right after each other toward the enemy at medium range works best.

PLAYSTATION 3

GET INTO THE GAME.COM

© 2003 Target Games. The Bullseye Design is a registered trademark of Target Brands, Inc. All rights reserved.

RTX RED ROCK



PLAYSTATION 3



Explosive Everything!
When you get into, it may be because you did not explore the level thoroughly. Did you hit all the enemies? Did you find a tank or level? Did you find the watch through the gun you a clear path through each level, so rather to walk through to you go. If you're stuck, move through the level, breakable objects. In some areas, you can use your Gunner Rifle. Show all items. They may replace an old getting better. It's a great way to reset another path.



Hidden characters, extra weapons and undiscovered worlds are all of your fingertips. Cut out the cards, slip them into the game's case for a quick trick.

When you get the trick, punch in these codes and really get into the game.

Check out www.getintothegame.com to download a coupon for \$5 off any game on this card. While you're here, get the scoop on all the hottest games and accessories.

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY



MONKEY BUSINESS

Don't forget Donkey Kong's General Frank (Diddy) and Al. When you've

of new on-screen characters there off the screen, and others you to get up on each banana. Try slapping the greased dough the matter of the mouth for hidden treasure: bananas, single bananas, or even 1-Up pellets!

• The first two sets of stages each have a "Wing Band" or "eagle" hidden somewhere. Merry bananas, too! Instead, use one to get all over from the development of the game to stage finish: Find one of these to unlock a special "Wing Bridge" to allow you to skip to the very end of the level and start!

• The key to controlling DK. Although made to fit the lines of enemies with your jump or controlled attack. Each enemy has a points value which is multiplied for each subsequent enemy you hit during your attack. Get up to eight 0's



but in a line, leaves on their heads, and environmental points on your!

• The cartoon key is the key to access in this game, and allows you to reach hazardous long distances, or those floating in space. Simply start a new level (it's not just as you begin to hit, press jump (A) and you'll continue to keep. Keep pressing B to increase your distance. Combine this with fast swinging, then the top of palm trees on the first level, and you'll secure two 1-Ups and one 2UP ladder!

DEF JAM VENUE 21



SUPER MOVIES

Remember Def Jam
The. Remember

get off the most frequent out-move of the game by dropping Funk Flex on his back, which will boost your Reputation meter for a second. It's a case if you follow up their moves with the same head bop.

you'll lose reputation because you did the same move twice in a row. If you follow up with a single hit or two, your Reputation meter will grow.

Use the Super Center: beat opponent with speeded combos. Every fighter in the game has their unique combos to their battles: how give or pass.



STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC



USE THE FORCE!

• Search every galaxy for Jedi and Sith. Journey's Gateway in the Lower City. Find Ebonny Officer Zax the Hologram, and converse with the Hologram you defeat. Search for the Jedi fighter Zax's or Zax's ally, each point!

• Visit Intermountain Park, a port-of-trade. Head to be in the 4th Area 97 that will say 500 pending the city. Lastly, if you want the corner pattern (Geez Lemn, you'll lose two billion more near the Stone Tower in the field!





4

■ **How it runs great while the others actively avoid making come.**

■ Xbox

BRUTE FORCE

■ Publisher: Microsoft
 ■ Developer: Digital Anvil
 ■ Release Date: May 28, 2003



Four games (well, no games really) promise to make their participants best friends forever, but then few games play like *Brute Force*, a high-concept shooter-meets-buddy-picture title that has up to four players covering each other's backs. Once you choose who's controlling each of the four characters—sniper, scout, gun nut, main-lizard—your team plays together via split-screen or system-link modes. Solo players can switch among characters and give orders to computer-controlled squad mates. But whether you play on mass or solo, teamwork is everything. "The four characters have different abilities," says Producer Eric Roberts, "so you'll get the best experience from coordinating the squad's activity to achieve your goals."

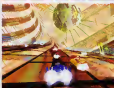


■ GameCube

F-ZERO GX

■ Publisher: Nintendo ■ Developer: Amusement Machine Sega
 ■ Release Date: July 2, 2003

3



■ It's a lot easier to target about 100,000 miles.



As anyone who tried the previous Super Nintendo, 64, or GBA *F-Zero* incarnations will tell you, the series appeals to more than just race fans. Sure it has the subtle controls (leaning into turns is key) and customizable vehicles (with different body loads, and grip ratings for each) for the car nuts, but it also has the futuristic settings and alien drivers so-fu-gasies low; the winding, roller-coaster-style tracks, huge jumps, and ramming boosts for the speed freaks, and ramming damage and exploding cars for aggro combat fiends. And look at these screenshots—graphics whores should enjoy just watching *F-Zero GX* zip along. And all this comes together under the watchful eye of Sega's Amusement Vision, who knows a thing or two about making games from his days creating the megapopular *Daytona* titles.



■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

SOUL CALIBUR 2

■ Publisher: Namco ■ Developer: Namco ■ Release Date: August 2003

2

It's safe to say that *Cal 2*, the second coming of the world's finest weapons-based fighter, should deliver with pure panache on every front.

For one, it's terrifically charming. Glorifying flags on windwept battlefields, and speed lines trace swords' trajectories. Yet unlike other recent gorgeous titles in the genre, *SC2*'s combat system is even more sophisticated than the game's appearance. Every agile move your character

executes has some practical importance. Take, for instance, twin-bladed terror Taki: Her swords catch the sun for a split second as she cartwheels like a human buzz saw, but it's the move's ability to advance around her enemy and strike from the side that really matters. Each challenger's arsenal boasts more than a hundred such attacks—every last one devilishly appropriate to a different circumstance. In fact, *SC2* is so

superbly balanced, you could justifiably call it chess on a sword edge.

Unlocking hundreds of character-specific weapons that you can equip in versus play will keep your inner collector occupied well into the crack-head hours of the night, long after the competition has gone home. We've been playing the import version for weeks now, and we're still completely hooked.



■ Character-specific characters like Jaxxon Link (below) and sword-bashers Sorrow (left) are full on.



taking out
the sith

1 STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC

by Denise O'Leary | Photos by Chris G. Johnson | June 11, 2008

Remember in *Empire Strikes Back* when Darth Vader says to his (lovely) handicapped son, "If you only knew the power of the dark side..."? Though Luke never followed in his dad's footsteps, we've always wondered what the life of a dark Jedi would be like and are pleased to report that the upcoming *Knights of the Old Republic* offers the opportunity to find out.

During your quest to save the Republic from the evil Lords of Sith, several decisions can sway your character's moral pendulum to light or dark. Some choices are simple: For instance, walking through the lower-city section of Tatooine, you'll come across brutish bounty hunters harassing a civilian for cash. Want your character to lean toward the light side of the Force? Help the poor guy out. But if you don't mind (or are actively interested in) bak-

ing your darker side, ignore his pleas and let him fend for himself!

Other choices are more complex. On the water planet Miriandou, for instance, a menacing beast impervious to your attacks guards an item you must retrieve. The easier way to circumvent this roadblock is to poison the water, killing the creature but also forever damaging the planet's ecosystem. A true Jedi will take the much tougher avenue and discover routes around the creature in order to recover the object. You quickly realize that following the light side is the harder road to travel.

"That's intentional," says Producer Michael Gallo. "[They] fits into the *Star Wars* mythology that the dark side is the quicker, easier path."

Gallo tells us that if you make more dark decisions, your character's skin will even turn pale—think of the Emperor minus the crown—lest your Jedi's light/dark status will



■ The good, the bad, and the oh-so-epic. Take a guess which one would be part of Vader's crew.

also affect which new missions open up for you in *KOTOR*.

As in the movies, the game offers a moment for redemption. "About 7/8 of the way through, you'll have to make the ultimate choice [about which path to follow]," Gallo says. *KOTOR* packs both light- and dark-side endings, which LucasArts says will translate into roughly 60 hours of gameplay. From where we're sitting, these elements make the title look like the best choice for your summertime gaming thrills.

Say good-bye to the sun rock.



■ Below: Your Jedi agains the lightsaber for good old-fashioned double-blaster action.



■ Miscellaneous includes swoop-like races, a card game called Pazzak (it's a lot like blackjack), and turret shooting.



TEST YOUR SKILL IN THE GREATEST YU-GI-OH! TOURNAMENT EVER!

© 1996 KAZUKI TAKAHASHI



It's time to duel! Yu-Gi-Oh! Worldwide Edition: Stairway to the Destined Duel features over 1000 cards, updated rules, enhanced AI and dozens of duelists to prepare you for the tournament of your life. Coming in Summer 2003, the Stairway to the Destined Duel will give you a chance to win exclusive cards, become the worldwide dueling champion and be crowned the new King of Games! Go to www.konami.com/yugiohtournament for the latest details.



Yu-Gi-Oh!
Worldwide Edition
Stairway to the Destined Duel

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED
ESRB

Mild Violence

GAME BOY ADVANCE

www.konami.com/usa



ON THE HORIZON

The games of summer not to your liking? Here's a look at many of the titles coming this fall and beyond



Illustration by Thomas Berthel



■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

SONIC HEROES

■ Publisher: Sega ■ Developer: Sonic Team
■ Release Date: January 2004

WHAT IS IT?

The Alaska weather might lead you into thinking Sonic's gonna bust out his chain-mail and go medieval on some ang-stoker dragons. You'd be wrong, of course, but the isn't exactly the same-old Sonic. Instead of roaming the Green Hills solo, you control one of four themed teams—Sonic, Tails, Rose, or Chackles—each with three characters from the Sonic universe. Each group has its own unique stages, stacked with multiple paths and missions to complete (although we hope *Sonic Adventure 2*'s hellish "find the Chaos emerald with your radar" missions aren't repeated), and the always-connected group moves in a pack, letting you switch the lead character whenever you want.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Heroes marks the first time a Sonic game has been released simultaneously on multiple platforms. Aside from that, it's a combination of tried-and-true Sonic gameplay and a new form of the multiple-character model from *Sonic Adventure*. Say you're playing as the Sonic team and you need a burst of superspeed—put Sonic in the lead and off you go. Or maybe there's a chasin you need to fly over Pop Tails in front and use his propeller tail to float the party over the danger. Need to reach the top of a cliff? Switch to Knuckles and climb. Now, let's get really crazy and say there's an enemy floating in the air in front of you. Switch to Tails, fly over and tap attack to "throw" your pals at the would-be foe. Now that's teamwork!



■ Multihero's little red snitch for a doleful of three. Solo's a little attacking of face.



■ Game back for more in next issue's Sonic Heroes cover feature.



PlayStation 2, Xbox

LEGACY OF KAIN: DEFIANCE

PlayStation 2, Xbox, Game Boy Advance, PlayStation 2, Xbox

WHAT IS IT?

Defiance continues the tale of two vampires, Raziel and Kain. These sanguinary heroes have quite a twisty history, spanning Raziel's two *Soul Reaver* games, Kain's two *Blood Omen* titles, and two systems (PS1, DC, PS2, Xbox, and GC). Together, their tales weave a dense fabric with more than a few loose ends—unintentionally dangling to the uninitiated (or easily confused).

But fear not. Eager for new blood, the developers are keen to make *Defiance* accessible to neophytes. In fact, now is a good time to get acquainted with the series. Rather than rehashing four games' worth of zigs and zags, *Defiance* briefly illustrates the lay of the labyrinth, then begins a new chapter of the story. This episode delves into the underlying mythology of Nosgoth, the dark and velvet (and, yes, gothic) world where the action takes place.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

We should say, *Nosgoth* is the world where a lot more action takes place. Combat is the linchpin of *Defiance*. Both Raziel and Kain have a variety of melee moves, including opponent-lifting uppercuts and aerial attacks reminiscent of *Devil May Cry*. In the early version we saw, eight human soldiers surrounded Kain. He began by dispatching three at once with his sword, then he raised another with an underhand strike before jamming up to the hapless human and kicking him off a cliff. He was already doing two more soldiers as the falling fellow's screams reached their ears. And of course, Kain drank blood from the last warrior's neck and walked away from the tussle with full health.

In *Defiance*, players control Raziel and Kain in alternating chapters of the story. As the tale progresses, both characters will gain new abilities—some shared and some unique to each. For example, we saw Kain float gently down a 200-foot drop, while Raziel quickly scaled a sheer wall with his claws. Both characters have telekinetics, which they can use hurl enemies onto spikes or smash them into each other—or to break the humans' furniture out of spite.

Our early look at the game showed few puzzles, no boss fights, and zero story details, but what we did see was winging combat, *Defiance*'s bloody combat, smooth cinematic camera, and brooding castles put us in the mood for diablerie.



■ Kain juggling spheres? The devil may cry.



PlayStation 2, Xbox

STAR TREK: SHATTERED UNIVERSE

PlayStation 2, Xbox
Dev: StarSphere ■ Ret: Sept 2003

Man an original *Star Trek*-inspired fighter in this space-combat game that takes place during Captain James T. Kirk's era (in the dark mirror universe). Sassy alien sexatrices not included.



PlayStation 2, Xbox

LORD OF THE RINGS: TREASON OF ISENGARD

PlayStation 2, Xbox
Dev: Gameloft ■ Ret: Oct 2003

This game is based on *The Two Towers* book instead of the film, but the snail-pace pace isn't the only thing to complain. And, like *King of the Kings*, it supports two-play or co-op multiplayer.



PlayStation 2, Xbox

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA

PlayStation 2, Xbox
Dev: Wurbler ■ Ret: Sept 2003

Play as young Starbuck Adams in this space shooter designed by the guys responsible for the *Cobra Vipers* series (PS1) and set forty years before the classic sci-fi TV series. Geeks (like us) will be happy to hear that you'll even fly a Cylon Raider in one mission.





Xbox
FABLE

Platform: Microsoft Xbox Series X/S, Xbox One, PC; Release: 2024 (estimated)

WHAT IS IT?

This is the story of a hero. And since this hero is—in fact—you, he's perhaps the greatest swordsman and doer of good deeds ever, a knight so saintly, sunshine pours from his rear. Or maybe he's a downright creep, the kind who would rob a blind beggar and then use the stolen loot to buy a sword to stab him. Perhaps he's even the sort who likes to wear a chicken suit into combat while lighting off his toes with a tiring pan. Formerly known as Project Goo, Fable promises epic RPG action and a totally malleable hero. Game designer Peter Molyneux has gone on record claiming

this Xbox game will be the best RPG ever, and although the jury is still out on that basis, there's no doubt Fable's creators at Big Blue (or are among sky-high. The game takes place over the course of the hero's lifetime, sending him on an epic quest to find his parents' killers—and then on to explore the larger mystery of how their deaths fit into the world around him.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

What you do in Fable's world shapes your hero, your three different attributes (Strength, Skill, and Willpower) can be developed separately, in conjunction with

one another, or not at all. "If you just hit things over the head all the time with the sword," says Lead Programmer Simon Carter, "your Strength will go up. If you take things a bit more carefully and use your bow and stealth-attack people, your Skill will go up. And if you use your magic an awful lot, your Willpower will go up. As you develop all these things, your hero will slowly change." Spiritually, your hero's appearance changes to reflect his development, a magically inclined character will begin to lose his hair, sport ornate tattoos, and eventually be trailed by a silverish-blue haze. Moral choices will also have an

effect—a totally evil character will draw bugs "flies are obviously attracted to evil," Lead Designer Dene Carter points out.

Fable's world is inhabited by (among others) huge rock trolls, pants-stealing nymphs, and werewolf-like creatures called Solvenettes that can infect the hero with lycanthropy. It's a European fairy tale brought to life, and from what we've seen, it looks gorgeous. In motion, the real-time combat and icon-based spellcasting system seemed smooth, but the real test will be how well the developers can balance the need for combat options while not pulling players out of the fantasy.



This character has taken a darker path, as evidenced by his zappy sense of style.



Your character grows old over time. Eventually, you'll have to wear your sword for a while.

Xbox
ARMED & DANGEROUS

Platform: LucasArts; Dev: Planet Moon; Release: Winter 2003

A band of Scottish rebels attempts to pull off the biggest heist in history in the midst of a huge war, in a quirky first- and third-person shooter from the makers of Duke (PS2).



PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube
THE SIMS: BUSTIN' OUT

Platform: EA GAMES; Dev: Maxis; Release: Early 2004

The second career edition of the best-selling PC game of 2003 lets you bust out hundreds of new objects, characters, careers (magician, thief, rock star, slicker), and locations.



Xbox
HEADHUNTER: REDEMPTION

Platform: Sega; Dev: Amaze; Release: Winter 2003

Assassin-for-hire Jack Wade returns with a wily (and a little psychotic) twist in this follow-up to Sega's Metal Gear Solid-meets-Sherlock game (which snuck out almost unnoticed).



PLAY
OUTSIDE
THE BOX!



NOT YOUR ORDINARY **GAME**
DEF JAM: VENOETTA PS2/XBOX

Three parts brawler and one part hip-hop video, Def Jam: Venoetta is clearly one of the most unique wrestling games available. Here, you've got a wrestler that puts gameplay before pageantry, offers action in place of entrance videos, and prizes super-sized special moves over the all-flair-but-no-peek People's Elbow. Plus, there's a story. And while the story isn't Pulitzer-worthy, it'll keep you battling through to the finale. The action starts with you picking a hero who's returning to his old stomping ground to help out an old friend who owes a dangerous man some money. His life's in danger, and since your old pal can't fight, you're drawn into an underground fight-club atmosphere ruled by money, power, gold chains, and cornrows. While the machismo gets laid on thick, it all works together here. After all, this game's backed by a rap label. The Def Jam crew members are the villains, with each artist acting as a boss. As you climb the ranks in Story mode and struggle to get the girl (well, girls—there's more than one), you'll earn cash, which you can use to buy attribute upgrades. There's all kinds of other stuff to unlock, too: new fighters (39 in all), stages, and even swank Phat farm threads, in case your wardrobe is low on powder blue track suits.



BREAK OUT OF



BREAK OUT
TRICKS

THE ORDINARY

**DYNASTY
WARRIORS 4** PS2

GET THE EQUINE
Under the hard difficulty play the Hu Lao Gate level on the Allied Forces side. You must have a level 9 Star Pike. Defeat Lu Bu to get the weapon. You can get this weapon in Free Mode.

GET THE PHOENIX PS2

At the Yellow Turban Fortress, as the Allied Forces under the hard difficulty setting, kill the following in this order: He Yi, Pei Yuan Shao, and Chen Yaunzhi. You must complete killing them in under six minutes. The weapon will have +54 attack power and at Level 9.



GET THE CHARGE BRACER
Play the Sun Jian Invasion Battle Level on Yuan Shao's side. Before the enemy backup troops arrive, enter the castle from the top. A supply team will appear to the south of the castle. If you defeat the Supply Captain of the Supply Team, you will get the Charge Bracer.



SECRET
CODES

**TONY HAWK'S
PRO SKATER® 4**
PS2/XBOX/PC

Enter the options menu, then select "Cheats." Enter watch_mn_xplode to unlock all cheats.



ENTER THE SECRET CRYPTIC
Enter the options menu, then select "Cheats." Enter homialist to unlock Mike Valiely and other secret skaters.

DARE TO LOG ON TO **BUTTERFINGER.COM**

Secrets and Challenge are trademarks of Namco. Def Jam: Venoetta is published by Electronic Arts, Inc. ©2004 Electronic Arts. For Def Jam and Def Jam VENOETTA and all associated logos and marks are used under license from Def Jam Holdings, LLC and The Island Def Jam Music Group, a division of UMG Recordings, Inc. This game is the property of Third Position, LLC and is used under license. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4 is a trademark of UMG. Use: UMG/EA/THG Co., Ltd. All rights reserved. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4 is published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. ©2003 Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Activision and the Skate are registered trademarks and Activision PS2 and Sports Revolution are trademarks of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4 is a trademark of UMG. All other trademarks and logos are property of their respective owners.



B.C.

WHAT IS IT?

Five hunters, all carrying wooden spears, cautiously approach a T-Rex in videogame form. This is known as a "bad idea." When they lose their spears, the flex rises up. It's passed, and someone's going to get hurt badly. And we're sad to say that the red stuff spurting out of the dinosaur's wounded belly and spraying from the hunter's wrecked corpse crunched between its jagged teeth isn't raspberry jam.

Peter Molyneux, the brains behind such PC classics as *Populous* and *Black & White*, calls *B.C.* "the priciest game ever." After watching hunters get torn apart, smashed, and otherwise divested of their lives in the most painful way imaginable, we'd have to admit he may be right. *B.C.* makes no bones about life being cheap and death being free and all-too-easy. Call it the first third-person "cessation in suffering" simulator for Xbox.

Players control a tribe, one member at a time, during their 100-mile journey to reach a safe haven. Along the way, you discover fire, build settlements and temples, invent new tools, craft weapons, and play havoc with the game's environment. In this fantastical world, early humans coexist with dinosaurs, so brains are the only way brown can be beaten. Use fire to wipe

out a stand of fruit trees, and the animals eating the fruit will flee, as will the carnivores that feed on them; block off a water supply by building a well around it, and watch all the animals head out in search of another drinking spot.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

All the game's creatures, from the fearsome T-Rex down to the lowliest rat, will be animated by hunger and thirst. In addition, every animal in the game, save for one quite notable exception, has been plucked directly from the fossil record. "Real creatures were so exciting and as ferocious as anything we could come up with here," says *B.C.*'s Development Director Matt Chilton, "especially the underwater ones."

Oh, and that notable exception? According to Lead Designer Ben Cousins, it's something completely different. And quite horrible. "Along the way," Cousins told us, "they'll meet another [animal] that we're not talking about. What we're doing is we're kind of thinking about a hypothetical prehistoric past where man was directly competing with another type of intelligent creature." It's kill or be killed when *B.C.* stops this fall.



▲ Above left: Falling to rub this giant game's belly fast enough, you die.

■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

THE SIMPSONS HIT & RUN

■ Pub: Vi Games ■ Dev: Radical
■ Ret: Sep 2003

Go on or drive on Springfield's streets, explore hot spots like the Kwik-E-Mart, and follow hundreds of hours of dialogue (voiced by the show's writers!) to find out what's really going on.



■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

HE-MAN: DEFENDER OF GRAYSKULL

■ Pub: TDK Meditative
■ Dev: Savage ■ Ret: Nov 2003

What to do with a cartoon about greased-up, muscle-bound men in leinights? Make an action-adventure game complete with Battle Cat rider and sword fights, of course!



■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER 2: CHAOS BLENDS

■ Pub: Vi Games ■ Dev: Eurocom ■ Ret: Aug 2003

In this game, set in a "lost episode" from *Buffy's* FOX series, you must stop evil from seeping in from 11 dimensional blood while playing as Buffy, Angel, Willow, Spike, and more.



■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

XIII

■ Publisher: Ubi Soft ■ Developer: Ubi Soft ■ Release Date: October 2003

WHAT IS IT?

Ubi Soft's first-person cartoony shooter is based on a similarly named French political-thriller comic. Think about the classic films *Passion* and *The Manchurian Candidate*; then add hard-core, moody styling reminiscent of Eldos' *Fear Effect* (PS1) and comic explosives ("Blast").

An assassin with a tattoo bearing "XIII" wakes up on a beach after a presidential assassination, and is soon on the run from the FBI and the XI, an organization set to kill him. Did XIII pull the trigger or was he trying to intervene? You'll have more than 30 levels to figure that out: bottles, ashtrays, and anything else you can pick up complement standard weapon accoutrements, and players can use stealth, sniping, and a "bitch sense" (implemented in comic-style window games) for tactical, heady gameplay. With any luck, you'll see plenty of dead people.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

XIII's dark, seductive theme is mediated through its art, but the game's moody operand is action. Producer Damien Morel offers an example: "You escape from a military base in a cable car. You that think [yes/no] OK, but soldiers are attacking you with bazookas, so you have to leave the cable car before it crashes..."



▲ Above/Below: The first GameCube shot.



Join the Anniversary
BASH



WHY SURF THE NET WHEN YOU CAN CONTROL IT.

Mega Man Battle Network 3: Blue version and White version are the biggest, most exciting Battle Network action-role playing adventures yet! Join Mega Mega.EXE, his pal Lan and friends as they keep the net safe from viruses, cyber criminals and a slough of other net-based menaces. Each version features different Mega Man styles, Battle Chip types, enemies, bosses and other surprises to discover and trade!

CAPCOM

GAME BOY ADVANCE

www.capcom.com/megaman



Mild Violence

Xbox

COUNTER-STRIKE

Publisher: Sierra ■ Developer: Ripstone
Release Date: Winter 2003



Return to Castle Wolfenstein reimagined in this style of gameplay for Xbox Live.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Valve promises the Xbox edition will have better special effects, improved characters and environments, richer sound, and levels from the PC sequel, *Condition Zero*, plus Xbox-exclusive multiplayer maps and two new solo missions for good measure.

Though Valve excitedly notes that *Counter-Strike* will support Xbox Live for online play, PC players who hope to compete against Xbox owners will be disappointed to discover that the versions won't connect. Valve also hasn't decided whether Xbox users will be able access player-created content, one of the most popular features of the PC game. Will *Counter-Strike* conquer the console wars? We'll know soon enough.



WHAT IS IT?

Few first-person shooters could possibly fill the hole left by *Half 2* in this year's Xbox holiday lineup. In theory, *Counter-Strike* is one of them. Released four years ago as a free multiplayer patch to Valve's *Half-Life*, *Counter-Strike* is still the most-played networked PC game in college dorms and cyber-cafes around the world. As in *SOCOM*, players are assigned to one of two warring teams: Soldiers or terrorists. This simple, storyless formula of real weapons and intense action has hooked millions of arm-chair commandos.

Xbox

SHADOW OPS: RED MERCURY

Pub: Atari ■ Dev: Zombie ■ Rel: June 2004

Scrape the action-movie story for this first-person shooter, it's the best of online captures the flag and deathmatch modes that really has our attention. We hope it keeps it, too.



Xbox

DEAD MAN'S HAND

Publisher: Atari ■ Developer: Human Head ■ Release Date: Fall 2003



WHAT IS IT?

Human Head, maker of *Alien: Verso* (PS2), is charting new frontiers by tackling an Old West motif in the first-person shooter. As the double-crossed desperado El Tejin, your lust for vengeance leads you to myriad good, bad, and ugly Wild West-themed mission-based scenarios, including showdowns, poker and horseback and train-top gunfights.



WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Dead Man's Hand holds a couple of aces, like the Legend system, which offers rewards for clever play. For instance, bust a whiskey bomb at an opponent in an out-house instead of spraying him with bullets and you'll gain the ability to fire special trick shots, which are sure to come in handy. Also, Xbox Live deathmatches promises to have your saddles blazing.

PlayStation 2, Xbox

SWAT: GLOBAL STRIKE TEAM

Publisher: Sierra ■ Developer: Argonaut ■ Release Date: October 2003

WHAT IS IT?

You have the right to remain anxious. *SWAT: Global Strike Team* promises to blend the strategy and tactics of *Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon*, the kind of action found in shooters like *Halo*, and *Splitter Cell*-style lighting and shadows.



WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

The main hook to the game is that you're supposed to arrest more gang members than you kill. Also, voice recognition via a headset controller lets you order around computer-controlled partners, or you can split the screen for cooperative and death-match modes. Expect over 20 levels, including futuristic: Los Angeles, Costa Rica, London, and Siberia missions. Online play is noticeably absent, but Xboxers will be able to download extra levels.



Xbox, GameCube

THE GREAT ESCAPE

Pub: Gotham ■ Dev: Penton ■ Rel: July 2003

Escape from a WWII POW camp in this mini-bound on the classic film. Gotham licensed down-and-out (and former sex symbol) Steve McCudden's likeness and voice, which is it once again and cool.



Xbox, GameCube

TRINITY

Pub: Activision ■ Dev: Gray Matter ■ Rel: Winter 2004

This single-player-only shooter looks like a war-torn variant of *Arctic Wolfenstein*. In it, you play a bio-enhanced vigilante out to save a plague-ridden city.




THE GREAT ESCAPE


Shot down behind enemy lines.
A prisoner of the Nazi war machine.
You must guide your hand of heroes in the
greatest escape in history.



Some of the loot with an
authentic WWII arsenal.



Commander motorcycles, jeeps,
and other military vehicles as
you speed to freedom!



Break from the shadows as you sneak
past Nazi guards and the Gestapo.



PlayStation 2



GOTHAM
GAMES



Visit www.esrb.org or
call 1-800-771-3772
for Rating Information

TM & © 2005 Midway Games, Inc. All rights reserved. PlayStation 2, Xbox, PC, and the PlayStation 2 logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries. The logo icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Gotham Games and the Gotham Games logo are trademarks of The Two Brothers Software, Inc. 2005 The Two Brothers, Inc. All rights reserved.

PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

SSX 3

Publisher: EA Sports Big Developer: EA Canada Release Date: Fall 2003

WHAT IS IT?

Instead of having tracks placed around the world, the latest SSX attempts to fulfill all of your snowboarding desires on a single lonely mountain. After seeing the game, we can attest to Producer Larry LaPore's claim that said mountain is indeed "49-\$40 big!" Courses are spread across three seamlessly interconnected peaks, and rival boards challenge you to both race- and trick-focused events as you ride down this side of Mother Earth. Thankfully, producing stylish runs should be easier this time around. "The core tricks have been redone to give an even better feel," says LaPore.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

It's quite a departure having one grandiose mountain that's totally accessible without any loading breaks—and it works pretty well in fact what we've seen so far. The single-player mode takes full advantage of the features, as the finale consists of a 30-minute sprint down all three intertwining peaks against your character's main rival. But there's still much to accomplish after you've declared king of the hill. SSX 3 includes more than 100 challenges, such as hand planting a fence or grinding billboards. And if you have the skills to complete these tasks, you'll gain access to unique character apparel, including new jackets and those oh-so-wacky Dr. Seuss-style top hats.



Expect songs by Queens of the Stone Age, X-Scalpers, R.E.M., and more.



WHAT IS IT?

Devouring countless pizza slices over the years hasn't stopped the world's most famous turtles from getting' back into shape for their highly anticipated return to the gaming world. This action beat-'em-up has cartoon-style visuals and Story and Versus modes, where mastering the katana, bo staff, nunchucks, and sai enables you to make mincmeat out of Street-beast and his notorious Foot clan.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Back in the day, many of us played down massive coverage on the addictive TMNT arcade games, so it's good news Konami

has brought back some of those team members to address on the project. "We incorporated their feedback and experience," says Producer Kengo Nakamura, "and created new features to make sure these games keep what was fun about the old games, but [also] evolve for next-generation videogame systems."

Too bad Story mode only supports two-player co-op rather than four like the now-annoyed arcade brothers. But at least we can knock the seat out of a friend in Versus mode with nontable characters like April O'Neil and Shredder. And fear not, Vanilla Ice won't be rewriting his raps (from the second TMNT film) for the game.



PlayStation 2, GameCube

TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU

Publisher: THQ Developer: Avalanche Release Date: Fall 2003

Guide this unlikely hero through a world where juju is abundant, one-wielding is required, blowpipes are the weapon of choice, and a trickles out can make your life.



PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

CRASH NITRO KART

Publisher: Udon Games Developer: Udon Games Release Date: November 2003

In this follow-up to Crash Team Racing (PS1), you compete in an ultrahigh-tech competition and can even play with up to eight players in multi-player or linked systems.



PlayStation 2, Xbox

CHAIN GANG

Publisher: Eidos Developer: Crystal Dynamics Release Date: Fall 2003

Down with animal Lustine! Shed-Bluray video Spines and co. has a way of Redmond the Rabbit must escape the evil Lustine he'll while the loud fog-thin.



EB GAMES™
electronics boutique®

XBOX
LIVE



ONLY ON

XBOX

#225499-3 849-66

CALL 1-800-800-5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU OR VISIT US AT WWW.E8GAMES.COM

■ Xbox

MORROWIND GAME OF THE YEAR EDITION

■ Publisher: Bethesda ■ Developer: Bethesda
■ Release Date: Fall 2003

WHAT IS IT?

Think of it as *Morrowind-Plus-Plus* with buggadoodo. This voko-priced package rolls together 2002's Xbox hit first-person RPG *Morrowind* plus two new expansion packs (which were sold separately on PC). Fans appreciate *Morrowind*'s 2D-plus character classes and sprawling 3D world full of quests. This edition augments that world with more A-list news.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Bethesda's *Tribunal* expansion adds new armor, weapons, enemies, and a continuation of the previous story line, while the *Bloodmoon* scenario splits off with a new emphasis on werewolves, winter weather, and the wilderness. Newbies can play through *Morrowind*, fans can resume their previous saved Xbox games, and anyone can bark at the moon from the start.

■ PlayStation 2

VECTORMAN

■ Publisher: Sega ■ Developer: Pseudo Interactive ■ Release Date: January 2004



WHAT IS IT?

Looking at these screenshots, you may not think this is the same *Vectorman* from the late days of the 16-bit Sega Genesis. That's because this now ass-kicking 3D-man is more *Master Chief* than the big pile of balls he used to be. But don't worry, he's still saving the universe from technology run amok in the third-person actioner.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

It makes our extremities tingle to think about another 16-bit franchise getting a 21st-century overhaul. But to satisfy our leggy finger's urge for carnage, *Vectorman* will have access to a arsenal of 15 weapons and 25 upgrades, including incinerators, frozen cannons, starblasters, biohooks, and grappling. (Aw, he's Ratchet and Clank.) Most of the environments are destructible, too, so, for example, you could destroy a huge pillar and then use it as cover while you plan your next attack.

■ PlayStation 2, GameCube

SECRET WEAPONS OVER NORMANDY

■ Publisher: LucasArts ■ Dev: Totally ■ Rel: Early 2004

Avoid anti-aircraft fire in more than 20 authentic World War II-era planes as part of an elite Allied flight squadron on a mission to knock the Third Reich's forces plumb out of the sky.



■ Xbox

SAM & MAX

■ Publisher: LucasArts ■ Dev: Telltale ■ Mischief ■ Rel: Spring 2003

The classic PC adventure comic-book-dog-detective and his rabbit sidekick gets a sequel. Expect surreal humor. Expect the trouble. Expect to sit in the mouth of a mad-dog yak.



■ Choose a hit and blade color to produce your own unique lightsaber.

■ Xbox

STAR WARS JEDI KNIGHT: JEDI ACADEMY

■ Publisher: LucasArts ■ Developer: Raven ■ Release Date: Fall 2003

WHAT IS IT?

Xbox-owning Potemkino, pack your bags—it's time to learn Jedi Master Luke Skywalker and learn the ways of the Force. Jetting across the galaxy to tackle missions might make your classmates label you a teacher's pet, but at least your customizable character will be rewarded with new techniques and Force powers (like Force Push and that blue lightning).

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Unlike its predecessor (*Jedi Outcast*), *Jedi Academy*'s combat is definitely lightsaber-centric. You can switch to first-person perspective and complete the game using traditional weapons like blaster rifles and Wookiee bowcasters, but, as Producer Brent Roth puts it, "That's not the way of a true Jedi." We respectfully submit that bad col-fures and facial hair shouldn't be either.



WHAT IS IT?

The fact that Xbox expensively needs another RPG notwithstanding, *Sudeki* is pretty intriguing. It's an action-RPG chronicling the journey of four heroes on a quest to save their shattered land. Looks and sounds like another Japanese RPG, right? Wrong: It's being created by Omega (*Special Kings*, *MidGP 2*) from jolly old England. The art and gameplay design just have a strong Eastern influence.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Sudeki gives you the interesting ability to command four characters in real-time. While you directly control one hero's actions, the other three react to your orders and specific battle situations. Each of the gunslinger, hunter, wizard, and swordsman characters is distinctly different—and have different moves, skills, and team attacks—so expect to jump around among them.

■ Xbox

ARX FATALIS

■ Publisher: Dreamcatcher ■ Dev: Arkane ■ Rel: Nov 2003

First-person RPGs don't usually turn out that well, but this one sounds cool (although hard to pronounce), especially since you can create your own weapons and spells.





it's your
funeral.

THE 7 TOUGHEST ADVENTURES
YOU'LL NEVER SURVIVE.



PlayStation 2



Mild Violence
Suggestive Themes



SQUARC ENIX.



© 2002 SQUARC ENIX CO., LTD. All Rights Reserved. Image Illustration: Tetsuya Nomura. The SQUARC ENIX logo and the Final Fantasy logo are trademarks of Square Enix Co., Ltd. "PlayStation" and the "PS Family" logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The speech icon is a trademark of the International Digital Software Association. Dolby, Pro Logic, and the double-D symbol are trademarks of Dolby Laboratories.

WANTED BY THE CIFR

PARTICIPATION IN PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATION;
UNLAWFUL FLIGHT TO AVOID PROSECUTION — MURDER

LUCAS BENJAMIN AKER



Aliases: Lou, Luc, "Commander," Benjamin Jaker, Lucky

DESCRIPTION

Date of Birth:

August 6, 1961

Height:

5' 8"

Scars and Marks:

Aker has a U.S. flag tattooed on his right shoulder

Eyes:

Blue

Complexion:

White

Nationality:

American

Remarks: *A self-taught commando, Aker has worked as a freelance mercenary. This hyper-patriotic militia leader is responsible for leading organizations that train in covert warfare, specifically against the U.S. Government. His militia organization is dedicated to "preventing the disintegration of America." Aker has run camps in Alabama, Florida and Utah.*

CONSIDERED ARMED AND EXTREMELY DANGEROUS

REWARD

\$100,000



PlayStation 2



MATURE



BLOOD AND GORE
STRONG LANGUAGE
VIOLENCE

Dead or Alive - You
Can Decide As You Go...



There is an impressive array of lethal and non-lethal weapons at your disposal. The more bounty money you bring in, the more you can buy, the more dangerous you become.



Your mission - to hunt the CIFR's Most Wanted. A web of terror will take you to exotic locations worldwide, eventually leading you to the Middle East.



These are the world's most dangerous criminals. They are heavily armed and highly skilled, with small armies of bodyguards. Engage with extreme prejudice.

WEAPONS:

Flechette Dartgun

Tactical Shotgun

Dragon Flamethrower

Car 4 Assault Rifle

AK74

Enforcer Pistol

Sniper Rifle

Grenade Launcher



FUGITIVE HUNTER

www.fugitive-hunter.com

ATARI

CASTLEVANIA REVAMPED

Konami digs straight to the roots to rebuild this classic series for its PlayStation 2 debut

By Shane Bettenhausen

In hills are deep, its walls are tall, its industrial strength is high, and its basement is infested with unsplaining ghouls, but 17 years after its bloody groundbreaking ceremony, Castlevania is still here, sweet home to hardcore gamers. Certainly, the ultra-Goth skyscraping castle at the center of the Castlevania series has had its share of renovations. History looks kindly on the successful retits (the infusion of role-playing elements into Symphony of the Night for PlayStation

and long for a more gritty, diabolical masterpiece like the classic 3D Castlevania for Xbox in '04). But beyond the series has absorbed the world in low form, considering how the irrelevant boys—Castlevania's Prince of who-hecking-heroes—have ennobled its castle to rubble.

But that sturdy legacy also presents a franchise owner's headache for developer Konami. Current gamers who weren't around for the series' classic installments may not get its old-school appeal, and its convoluted chronology—how vil-

ain Dracula has come back from the dead several times to make Oberon's—B) bound to battle even longtime fans. If Castlevania is to live in a new generation, change is in order. Castlevania: Lament of Innocence, due exclusively for PlayStation 2 in November, seeks to suck in new-blood gamers by tossing out the series' heavily marked-up blueprints. Lament announces a new beginning—a new hero, a story line that finally explains the genesis of Dracula, and a revolutionary 3D reworking of the series' gameplay.



Your first bite

"It's funny how there are vampire myths all over Europe and Southeast Asia, yet the only story people seem to remember is Dracula," says Koji Igarashi—he'd rather you call him "Iga"—the producer who holds the keys to Castlevania. (He's been involved with the series' latest *Symphonic of the Night*) Tall, pale, and clad entirely in black, Iga would make a fine Dracula in a monster flick. Well, a Japanese Dracula, anyway. It makes us

understand—and that makes him perfectly suited for the task of re-imagining the ratty Belmont-whip-snapper-Drac myths. "I love the world of Dracula," says Iga, "and I want to debut on the PS2 very dramatically by making this the best *Castlevania* ever."

One of Iga's first steps for his latest *Castlevania* was to devise a new setting within the series' already overstuffed timeline. "It's hard to fit in new games, since Dracula is only supposed to revive every 100 years.... We're out of possible

"I want to debut on the PS2 very dramatically by making this the best *Castlevania* ever."

—*Castlevania* Producer Koji Igarashi

wonder if there's more to his "vampire myths all over Southeast Asia" comment than he's letting on. (Our hands cover our throats a few times during our interview with Iga at Konami's Tokyo HQ.) The exec holds an interest in the occultlore that extends far beyond the games he designs—he's generally intrigued by the world of the

ceremonies," he says. "Also, in the previous games, the Belmont clan and Dracula are already established—you never really know why they keep fighting." Rather than attempting to squeeze in yet another vampire rebirth of the stock characters, Iga has chosen to tell the origin of the entire franchise. "In *Lament of Innocence*, I want to explain



Love's combination with Drac (right) unfolds in a slick real-time cinema...with lots of stylish products. One of Lord's whip combos (far right) flails foes into the air for juggle combos.



1988

So why did you go for a medieval setting? Leon Belmont, the Prince for the Eminent Treatment of Malicious In-AD, is what you'd give to your Medusa.



where my Dracula came from and why the Belmonts became vampire hunters," he tells us. So, the game is set in the 11th century—a full 500 years before the earliest of the already-chronicled Castlevania events—when Dracula first becomes a vampire.

Leon Belmont stars as Lament's pretty-boy

helping young heroes (a class he used to be a vampire hunter himself). He hands over his trusty whip to Leon, and the adventure begins. "When Leon goes after Sara, he has no foreknowledge of Dracula or the monster that took his girl," says Iga. "He just goes in to save her, and his destiny is waiting for him in the castle."

"I seriously feel like I've looked at every 3D game ever made."

—Castlevania Producer Ryo Igarashi, on his research for Lament

hero and progenitor of the famous clan. Unlike past whip-toting Belmonts, he's no random stud in leather shorts; rather, he's a knight in the service of a local baron, so he's actually a well-respected, upstanding chap. His happiness heads death, however, when a creepy beast kidnaps his fiancée, a demure girl named Sara. Before he can rescue his intended, Leon must get permission from the Church—but the clergy's too busy waging the Crusades to look into the matter. So Leon turns to his sword, gives up his rank, and humbs his nose at their aid/flores.

As he follows the beast's trail to the church-sending Dark Woods, he runs into Renaldo Gascoi, a crusty alchemist with a soft spot for

Blood simple

"What I care about is bringing a past enough story, not to overstate or spoil the action," Iga explains. "The story must serve to elevate the experience." So, once the cinematic opening does its thing, the game gets down to business, and you, as Leon, embark on your whapping frenzy in Dracula's abode. And if you thought the 11th-century backstory drew new blood from the series, standy yourself!—the radically retrofitted gameplay taps an even greater vein of inspiration.

First and foremost, Lament of Innocence completely reworks the series' traditional 2D side-scrolling gameplay into 3D. And while it's not the first Castlevania attempted in this dimension, it

beyond castlevania

ACTUAL (AND REALLY) IDEAS FOR FUTURE SERIES INSTALLMENTS

Castlevania mastermind Ryo Igarashi has a stockpile of game concepts tanking in his caffeine mind. Ask him the right questions (or after him the right beverages) and they start spewing out like mad. We can't guarantee that any of these ideas will come to fruition, but we've connected some illustrative screenshots just in case. Note: We did not make these game concepts up. Haecst.

CASTLEVRIS



"Imagine a cyber Castlevania world in which Dracula is a computer virus and Belmont is the virtual vaccine who must defeat him," says Iga. Our response to this way-out-there futuristic idea? "Whoa."

BLAZEPLOWNA



"I really enjoyed the vampire movie *Blade*," says Iga. "So, if the game took place in modern times, maybe a black guy could be the hero of Castlevania." Picture a game mixing all the wicked undead creatures we love with a dose of urban flix. Well, it would have to be better than the *Assassins Blade* if for PS2 and Xbox that crawled to store shelves last year.

Continued on page 160

cool fusion

MAGIC ORBS PUT YOUR SUBWE'FONS

Like his many Belmont descendants, Leon totes a small flask of holy water. He also finds daggers, axes, crosses, and crystals (an all-new item that works like a third meta) to be superior to the staff. Heaving these handy pickups off for is fun, but scooping them up with magic is even better. As in *Castlevania: Anniversary Collection*



(GBA), you can imbue each subweapon as Lament with seven different effects by combining them with Red, Blue, Yellow, Green, White, Black, and Purple Orbs.

Each of the 35 possible Orb-weapon combos offers a powerful, screen-scaring attack. Among the jaw-droppers ones we witnessed: a flying dragon made of daggers that swirls across the screen and browes eases; a duo of massive axes that orbit Leon, providing powerful defense; and a massive crucifix of light that obliterates all enemies' eyes.



Leon prepares to flip the ball out of this switch.

LOOKING FOR A NEW HERO!

RENT A HERO No. 1™

LY97G-0-



Comic Mischief
Mild Violence

SEGA

CREATED BY AND PRODUCED BY



PUBLISHED BY



Rent A Hero No. 1 © SEGA CORPORATION, 1991, 2003, 2003. All Rights Reserved. Created by and produced by SEGA CORPORATION. In cooperation with CoolNet Entertainment Co., Ltd. Published by AM USA, Ltd. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. All other trademarks are property of their respective owners.



Leon's distressed
sweetie Sera Belmont

is the first one Konami has done right, Iga firmly believes. "There are many problems with the NES *Castlevania*," he says, "the biggest being that it just isn't fun to control your character." While he and his team had no involvement with those games, they've studied them closely as examples of what not to do while making theirs.

Gameplay research wasn't limited to games within the *Castlevania* family. "I consciously feel like I've looked at every 3D game ever made," says Iga, laughing. "Perfecting the camera is the most difficult aspect. In a 2D game, it's easy to see the distance between your character and an enemy. But in 3D, it's tough to display the distance properly because the camera is always changing." He made the decision to eschew the admittedly cool-looking cinematic camera style of Capcom's *Devil May Cry* (PS2) in favor of a fixed overhead camera

that swoops and pans only in areas with no combat. The end result is a perspective similar to that of the novel PS2 adventure *Toy*; you'll never be surprised by a confusing angle shift while you're in the thick of skeleton-whipping action.

And whip you will—prepare to lash out at a massive legion of 70-plus bosses. *Castlevania* does the RPG-tinged swordplay of *Symphony of the Night* in favor of classic whipping action. Although you'll find subweapons, armor, Relics, and other items during your quest, the whip is the only weapon Leon wields. However, your trusty leather lash changes as you progress. "The alchemist eventually powers up the whip into the legendary Vampire Killer," explains Iga, "and you can also change the whip's properties by applying magic like Flame or Frost." Oh, and it's handy in peaceful situations, too: Use it to swing between

better, stronger, faster

NEW RELICS BRING BIONICS TO THE MIDDLE AGES

Watering spell-fuse attacks provide the most of your offensive capabilities, but Leon has a few supernatural powers up his sleeve, too: He finds some legendary Magic Relics stowed away in Dracula's castle. The catch? Leon can't use these skill boosters right away. "Gags like Alucard and Dracula can use magical Relics because they're not humans," explains Konami's Iga. "The alchemist performs some enhancements to Leon's left arm so he can use them, too." A basic vampire hunter from a millennium ago? That's why we love videogames. You'll find 10 Relics in all, and we give you a peek at five of them:



Leon sparks out his magical abilities with the Vampire Killer.

LEG OF THE WOLF—Equip this severed lupine appendage to give Leon superhuman speed. "There are places in the castle that are only accessible when you use this magic," explains Iga.

STARBUST—Turn on this fantastical fairy powder to regenerate your health. Handy during boss encounters, but it wastes away your Magic meter.

INVINCIBILITY POT—Remember the gag you'd pick up to become invincible for a few seconds in the original NES *Castlevania*? It's back, in Relic form. And boy, does it use up Magic points like crazy.

LUCIFER'S SWORD—This demonic Relic transforms Leon's body into a human Golem. Hurl yourself at enemies to cut like a knife.

SWARD STAKE—While holding this mysterious old statue, Leon leaves a trail of fire in his wake that damages enemies if they touch it.



ULTIMATE MUSCLE

THE KINNIKUMAN LEGACY™

Some wrestling games are Nice, Fun to Play games.

Others will **SMACK** that stupid grin right off your pansy little FACE.

"Just when you thought wrestling-styled games couldn't get any crazier, along comes MU with (WWF WrestlingMania N64) with the Ultimate Muscle, one of the fastest, most intense brawlers yet on Nintendo GameCube."
-IGN

WHICH ONE ARE YOU GOING TO PLAY?



Comic Mischief
Violence



GAME BOY ADVANCE



Ultimate Muscle™ The Path of the Thunder © 2003 FUJITSUBASHI BUNSHA, TOKYO JAPAN. Program © 2003 Regressive © 2003 Ban Dai America Inc. Ultimate Muscle™ Logo and New Generation © 2003 FUJITSUBASHI BUNSHA, TOKYO JAPAN. © 2003 Ban Dai™, © Game Boy Advance and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2003 Nintendo. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

Leon's whip is handy for both sweeping through the balcony (above) and cutting faces (below).

platforms or to pull Leon up into a high ledge.

The shift away from Symphony's stat-building and role-playing elements means Lovers' doesn't dish out experience points. Although Igo is eager to draw new players to the series, he feels the level-up system might have made the game too easy. "In Symphony, less-skilled players can level up until they're able to progress," he says. "It's a drawback for skilled gamers who find the game too easy as they gear heads." Now, talented players will be challenged throughout, and weaker players must explore every nook and cranny of the castle to find power-ups and healing items.

Teeth sunk in

So, we have the remarkably stylish Leon Belmont on a quest to save his beloved, armed with his whip and exploring a gorgeous castle in full 3D...but what does it actually feel like to play? Damned fun, even at this early stage, we can tell that painstaking research went into perfecting the gameplay. Movement is swift and tight. Leon double-jumps like a pro from the outset, and the fixed-camera perspective provides a stable view of the onscreen chaos.

Combat also provides elemental thrills. You have two attacks: a weak, spooey Light Attack

digging too deep

EMBARRASSING MOMENTS IN CASTLEVANIA HISTORY



THE HAUNTED CASTLE AD

It's amazing how much the image of Castlevania has changed over the years. Now, we have lush paintings of dapper heroes advertising the games, but back in 1986, Konami hawked the *Haunted Castle* arcade game with this ad. And you wonder why you've never heard of it.



and a powerful, slow Heavy Attack. Mix them in combos and Leon dishes out a Gothic ass-slapping that's as impressive to watch as it is rewarding to pull off with the controller. But wait, there's more: You can catch groups of vile monsters in your whip's wake to rock up multi-hit combos. Or bust out a steady kick between who licks, sedate to avoid getting hit, and execute timely parry moves with expert presses of the Block button (such successful block raises your Magic meter). No part. Quick-walk title offers so many ways to crack undead skulls.

Of course, Leon's trek through the castle is

illustrator of the undead

AYAMI KOJIMA GIVES DRAC'S WORLD A WOMAN'S TOUCH



Back when Producer Koji Igarashi was working on *Symphony of the Night* for PS1, he decided Castlevania needed an image makeover. "In old Castlevania games, you see a macho guy," he tells us, "but the story and character designs were lacking." So Iga sought out a beautiful, beautiful art style with which to brand the series. After rummaging through a bookstore looking at cover illustrations, he found his artist: Ayami Kojima. And, yep, the character illustrations you see scattered throughout this cover story are hers. We had a rare opportunity to ask Miss Kojima a few questions about her work on the series, and we quickly discovered that she's full of surprises. You can find the full interview transcript at gaming.com, but here are four things you might not have guessed about this polite, demure illustrator.

SHE'S ENTIRELY SELF-TAUGHT—That's right, she has no art-school education. In fact, she attributes her success to being self-taught by the conventions of rules and styles. "I think that I'm doing much better than those who went to art school because I just go with my gut feelings," she says.

SHE PREFERS OLDER MEN—DRAWING THEM, THAT IS—You might imagine that Kojima revels in drawing the luscious, effeminate Castlevania heroes, but the young guys aren't her favorites. "I love drawing middle-aged guys," Kojima explains. "I really like drawing Count Dracula."

SHE DOES KUNG FU AND ROBOT COMICS—Kojima prefers violent boys' comics to more girly stuff like *Sailor Moon*. Her favorites include *Fist of the North Star*, *Astro Boy*, and *2001 Nights*. "The themes in girls' comics are so boring," she says. "I wasn't satisfied with those books, so I gravitated to the boys' books for exciting heroes, villains, and action."

SHE'S AS WIGNED OUT BY COSPLAYERS AS WE ARE—Cosplaying (in which fans dress up as their favorite game or anime characters) is always a little shocking, but Kojima has had encounters with it that hit especially close to home. "I once saw a bunch of guys who looked strangely familiar, and then I realized that they were cosplaying as my characters!" Kojima says. "I was shocked, but I said, too—I asked if I could take their picture."

digging too deep

EMBARRASSING MOMENTS IN CASTLEVANIA HISTORY



KID DOACULA'S BOSS

In Japan, a zany Castlevania offshoot called *Kid Doacula* graced that country's version of the 8-bit NES. How zany? Above, that's *Kid Doacula* fighting a giant KKK member wearing a swastika-embellished hood. Run-up for warlike boss: the Statue of Liberty, which attacks by asking questions about America.

more than a boner-for-herms of ancient whippings. You solve tricky puzzles, locate hidden passageways, and navigate past some real-life traps. We trod through areas crammed with colossal swinging blades. We trod on floors teeming with deadly spikes. We even experienced a lazarus, speedy challenge Iga calls the castle's "roller coaster." Trust us, you're not ready for it.

Just as in *Symphony of the Night*, the physical castle here isn't a linear progression of stages, instead, it's a complex layirth of rooms and hallways demanding exploration. Five distinct areas comprise the castle: cathedral, laboratory, garden, open house, and dungeon. But don't take that to mean this game is a mere fan-level romp. Each area is massive, with plenty of places to explore and minibosses to conquer, plus a final

melee with a frantic boss monster (known as an Elemental Knight). Since that is Castlevania, the castle isn't entirely unfamiliar to longtime fans. "I'm not sure gamers will recognize them, but yes, some of the areas are from past games," explains Iga. "But you won't find a clock tower level here, since mechanical clocks weren't invented until the 13th century." Historical accuracy—the calling card of a developer who really gives a damn.

Sandcastlevania

Despite its 2D limitations, *Symphony of the Night* offered fantastic, erotic visuals. Conveying a similar level of Gothic beauty in three dimensions requires a lot of work. Latest's development team is four times larger than *Symphony's*, and mastering the PS2's prodigious took the group some time. "Designing a game is like building a sand castle," says Iga. "You'll build it all up, but when you come back later, it's collapsed and you have to start over from scratch." So, despite working for more than two years on *Symphony*, Iga and his team abandoned everything they'd created to start again on the PS2.

Though the graphics are crucial, it's still the gameplay that's integral to the Castlevania experience. So, before any real rooms were mapped out, Iga focused on a barren engine with a place-holder character (a 3D model of *Symphony's* Richter Belmont) whipping his way through building-block environments that looked straight out of a *Metaphor* *World* *War* *III* mission. Once the gameplay foundations were in place, the team started painting the castle walls.

It may not match the gritty grandeur of *Silent Sinner* *7*, but *Latest* already looks sweet—and in the screens here, the final pass of visual polish hasn't yet been applied. Much of the next six months will be spent refining the lush environments. You're also being denied the game's most impressive feature, since screens can't illustrate



Lee's
pudgy man:
The Akhenat



• Gothic stone-hewn gargoyles were relatively big and new in the 11th century. Gargoyles were especially cool, since they killed people.



the excellent motion-captured animation. Lee's whip moves with realistic fluidity and physics. A veteran director of stage productions helped design all of his acrobatic movements. "It's an

feat." "Since the story is set in such a different age from that of *Symphonia*, I decided electric guitars would be out of place," says Yamano. "Instead, I used natural instruments for a more classical

"The first thing I asked of my team was to make sure the game is very fast and smooth to play."

—Castlevania Producer Iga (Game)

old-timer's way of thinking," says Iga, "but the first thing I asked of from my team was to make sure the game is very fast and smooth to play."

Iga chose long-time Konami composer Michiru Yamano, the woman behind *Symphonia of the Night*'s memorably morbid tunes, to create *Lament of Innocence*'s all-new soundtrack. She brings a familiar blend of no-tempo beats and serene classical beauty to the 40-plus tracks in *Lament*, but the music definitely has a unique

feel. "For our full interview with Michiru Yamano, head to egm.ag.com.) The music we heard was stunning—so good, in fact, that Iga is considering packing a copy of the soundtrack with the game (as Konami is doing with *Silent Hill 3*).

On the voiceover front, *Lament* will ship with both English and Japanese dialogue tracks. The English acting we heard sounded just fine—probably since Iga personally oversees his production at a professional recording studio in Hollywood.

beyond castlevania

TWO MORE ACTUAL IDEAS FOR FUTURE SERIES INSTALLMENTS

CASTLEMANIA



In Japan, Konami produces several hit rhythm-action games like *Beatmania* and *DrumMania*. Castlevania Producer Iga says he sees potential in a music game based on the funky pipe organs, moaning choruses, and haunting oboe solos in Castlevania's tunes. Frankly, we'd rather see DJ Drac do some mad scratchin' before we play another Britney Spears game.

DRACULA MAKER



Perhaps drawing upon his work on Japan's *Rokkaku* *Memento* dating-game series, Iga says he's conceived a sim game in which you raise Dracula through his formative teen years. Rigors of undead adolescence include awkward candlelight dinners at an Italian restaurant (watch out for garlic) and the issue of whether to take on the first date. Again, we are not making these ideas up (although Iga is no doubt having a bit of fun with us).



Low heads of sneezing enemies with hit-bit-powered dagger-spell prevents.



Microsoft, the Microsoft Game Studios logo, Xbox, Xbox Live, and the Xbox Live logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of the Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Photo: Andrew Bernstein/ActionStock.com
and screenshots are used with permission of Major League Baseball Properties. For more information visit mlb.com. Official MLB Licensee Major League Baseball Properties. ©2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.



How will you get ready for the most competitive, trash-talking, online baseball league in the world? Well, you'd better



practice. Offline. Because when you play *Inside Pitch 2003*, the only baseball game on **Xbox Live**, you're playing the best.



INSIDE PITCH 2003



www.xbox.com/insidepitch2003



XBOX LIVE ONLINE ENABLED





Get ready for hyper-gaming.



200
The sound effect you're not hearing accompany Lector's Thunder-whip attack sounds something like "Bra-braaah!"

Fass didn't worry about a repeat of *Symphony of the Night*'s groundbreaking writing and acting. "That wasn't my fault!" exclaims Iga. "I was told that the game wasn't going to be dubbed, but then they changed their minds and we had to do it really quickly here in Japan." He proceeds to miso carefully acted lines like "Who are you?"

But if you're wishing for an Xbox or GameCube version at Lambert, don't get your blood pressure up. "I chose to make the game for the PS2 simply because it has the most users," says Iga. And since he's spent so much time building this PS2 sand castle, he's not interested in moving to another console's beach. That doesn't

"I chose to make the game for the PS2 simply because it has the most users."

—Castlevania Producer Koji Igarashi

and processes never to let acting like that happen again.

Not the last bite

Iga's explanation of Castlevania's continued appeal is simple: "Foremost, it's the gameplay that draws people to the series, but the cool vampire mythos and excellent music help." He's definitely covered those bases while crafting this PS2 re-introduction to the classic series, and it should get both hardcore fans' and newcomers' blood boiling this fall.

mean Iga is through remodeling the halls of Castlevania, though—not even close. He admits that scads of plot concepts still lurk in his mind, and laughs that "as long as this one sells a lot of copies, we won't have to wait another six years for his next big-console groundbreaking of Castlevania." **W**

Don't forget to check out www.gaming.com for even more exclusive Castlevania content, including full interviews with the developers, a handy series timeline and a gorgeous downloadable desktop wallpaper image.



For such an old gag, Dracula sure has quite an amusing church built inside of his house. What a boob.

digging too deep

EMBARRASSING MOMENTS IN CASTLEVANIA HISTORY



FRED ASKARE AND PAULA ADRIANO

We're still not sure who's responsible for naming this ghoulish waltzing duo from *Super Castlevania IV* (Super Nintendo), but we know that we hate them. We take our Castlevania games pretty seriously, and we don't ever want to be interrupted by thoughts of MC Skat Kat from the "Opposites Attract" video.



WarioWare, Inc.
Over 200 lightning-quick
microgames in one serving.



© 2002 Nintendo. TM, © and Game Boy Advance are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2002 Nintendo. Game and Game Boy Advance sold separately. www.warioware.com



Comic Mischiefs



review crew

Your monthly guide to gaming's winners and losers

THE RATING SYSTEM

Each reviewer assigns an overall grade to each game, on a scale from 0 to 10. When a game receives a 10, you can rest assured that it's one of the best games ever made, a classic that will endure throughout the ages. Conversely, when a game gets a 0.0, it's complete and utter crap and should be treated like a deadly biohazard. We utilize the entire scale, so a game that gets a 5.0 is average, not bad. **We repeat: 5.0 IS AVERAGE.** The scores are now color-coded, so the brighter the reds, the better the game.

0-4.5
BAD

5.0-6.5
FAIR

7.0-10
GOOD

OUR AWARDS



Platinum Awards go to games that get at least 10, the ultimate review a game can get.



Gold Awards go to games with an average score of 9.0 or higher. Quality stuff.



Silver Awards go to games that average at least an 8.0 (but are not higher than 9.0).



This honor is bestowed upon the highest-reviewed game each month. A worthy buy.



This distinction goes to the worst game each month that gets unacceptably low scores.

ESRB KEY (Also check out www.esrb.com)

EC-Everyone
Contains little to no blood, violence, or sexual content.

E-Everyone
May contain mild language, violence, or sexual content.

E10+
May contain some mild language, violence, or sexual content.

TE-Teen
May contain some violence, language, or sexual content.

M-Mature
May contain strong violence, language, or sexual content.

GAME OF THE MONTH



■ PAGE 116

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE EPISODE I & II

Sure, we already snatched about 45,000 Rag Flippies in the last three versions of PSO, but the addition of Xbox Live voice chat has us enthralled by this awesome online RPG all over again.

directory

- 105 Return to Castle Wolfenstein: Tales of War
- 106 Arc the Lad: Twilight of the Spirits
- 106 MotoGP 2
- 106 Unlimited Saga
- 108 Yokuza: The Legend of Drifter
- 108 Yokuza
- 110 Tribe Sliver
- 112 Chase Legion
- 112 Ultimate Muscle: Legends vs. New Generation
- 114 World of Warcraft
- 116 Phantasy Star Online Episode I & II
- 116 Resident Evil: Dead Aim
- 117 Sonic Pinball Party
- 118 Donkey Kong Country (GBA)
- 118 Evil Dead: Fattal of Sessylick
- 120 X2: Wolverine's Revenge
- 121 Burnout 2: Point of Impact
- 122 Advance Wars 2: Black Hole Rising
- 122 Bloody Roar Extreme
- 123 Dragon Ball Z: Legacy of Goku II



■ Other weapons may have longer range, but these, they don't make your foes run around on fire.



■ If you have to shoot Nash, might as well make them staggered, leather-clad, high-booted female Nash, right? That's all we're saying, so know?





▶ The two-player split-screen isn't quite Halo-level, but it's still a treat.

■ Xbox / Also On: PlayStation 2

ONLINE



RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN: TIDES OF WAR

Mein Lieben! This is what you bought Xbox Live for

PAM: Escape, 1943. The Nazis' research on the occult yields an unstoppable army of zombies, gan-gling nazi-beasts, and lightning-banded priests wearing stylish velvet robes. But undead soldiers can't mind the clink in the Nazis' Argon armor—oh, Americans with a surfeit of movie can bring down the whole shebang. Like Wolfenstein 3D (PC), its old-school namesake, *Tides* challenges players with enemies' toughness and sheer numbers rather than clever artificial intelligence. Be prepared for lots of trial and error.

The story is compelling, but it's not actually integrated into gameplay. You need to read your journal to figure out where you are, what you're doing, and why you're throwing so many damn switches. Still, aside from some frustrating moments, the single-player campaign is well-paced and entertaining.

But *Tides* is even better with a partner: In Cooperative mode, progress comes at a steady clip and with fewer die-outs. Different play styles are an advantage: Shawn's precise sniping paved our

way forward while my berserker spee-eeeee saved our bacon from Nazi ambushes. That's synergy! And if you think hooking up with one comrade is fun, try blasting with 15 real people—*Tides* is an absolute blast on Xbox Live. Team members of all four classes must coordinate their efforts to succeed in the expert objective-based scenarios. If any element is lacking (e.g., no lieutenant, poor communication), you'll lose and deserve it. But when your team comes together, victory is sweet.

SHAWN: Don't that if you prefer your shooters on the serious side—*Tides* isn't all mecha-Nazis and walking cadavers. The forces you'll face in its excellent online mode are firmly rooted in reality. And fighting on these richly detailed multiplayer maps makes it all worthwhile. An amphibious assault on a fortified seacoast is infinitely more engaging against live targets. When a silent snig harp your squadmate into the concrete wire, you lament his loss—and feel pervasively satisfied.

when you incorporate the responsible sniper. Add objectives that eliminate matches above banal blood-baths, the saving Nazi strongholds and extracting encrypted documents, and you've got a game that is, at least in part, better than *Halo*.

MARK: Despite its occasionally confusing level layouts (you'll often wander around looking for newly opened doors), single-player *Tides* offers a rock-solid game of good ol' fashioned Nazi-kick: satisfying weapons, natural—and very customizable—controls, and objectives that make your straightforward tasks (often just "find the switch") somehow seem more exciting. But we all agree that what elevates this Wolf above the FPS pack is its online aspect. The different playable characters and match types give multiplayer a unique emphasis on teamwork that's a perfect match for Xbox Live's voice-chat capability. Sure, I wish the graphics were a bit more detailed, but I'm having too much fun storming Nazi beach strongholds to really care.

▶ Those after-school specials were right—cooperation really is fun!



Zombie's Revenge: Years ago we rocked horror-rocker Rick Zombo and his song "Disgust" for being an so many game soundtracks. Now his graced likeness appears in two games at one month, first as a dead-ender for the final Wolf boss above, and later in X-2 (page 128). Which brings us to the inevitable question, "Why does God hate us so?"

Soldier needs ammo...body

Online, you'll select one of these classes. Each one has special abilities to support your teammates.

Soldier:

The heart of any fighting unit, he wields the biggest guns.



Lieutenant:

He disperses ammo and calls in airstrikes.



Medic:

Dr. Pain heals himself over time and revives fallen comrades.



Engineer:

Need something exploded? Repaired? Here's your guy.



▶ Sniping online can be tricky (since even slight lag can throw off your shots), but offline, it's pure bliss.

Check Xbox Live-enabled on your

list: Surprise! Another sneak!

Distilled From Our History Books: Sony N: a domestic cop



PAUL

8.5

SHAWN

9.5

MARK

8.5

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Nerve Software/Sledge Software
Players: 1 (2 Co-op, 2-16 online)
ESRB: Mature

www.gorilla.com/0520

PlayStation 2 / Also On: Xbox

ARC THE LAD: TWILIGHT OF THE SPIRITS

Not exactly a lad, but not quite a man, either



● Arc's striking breastplate/skirt combo will be a couple levels in no time flat.



● (Center) No squares or boxes here—you're free to run wherever you choose during combat.

Good: Cool interacting story lines
Bad: Reiter-gamer difficulty level
 At least 16 years old and 170 lbs. Arc Collector (PS1)



GRIG: I thought the first three Arc role-playing games were mediocre, and the one's only marginally better. The old games' pseudo-story battles normally degenerated into surrounding an enemy and hacking away until it died. Sadly, *Twilight's* combat suffers from the exact same problem, but with the added bonus of crazy, uneven difficulty. Once in a while the game dishes up a particularly crucial battle that requires you to defeat multiple foes with one guy or protect self-destructive characters from harm. These skirmishes, while cool from a plot standpoint, screw up the difficulty curve and game progression, often requiring three or four replays to be successful.

But if you can deal with the severe challenge (and I know some people will), Arc's story is surprisingly cool. You divide your time playing as two separated-at-birth brothers who are drawn together by fate, and it's a neat payoff to merge their disparate tales. Also, plenty of subtle references to previous Arc games will surely please series fans. Overall, *Twilight* is a serviceable RPG, just not a great one.

SHANE: I'm not sure why Greg has such a hate-on for the Arc franchise. I think he's being a little rough on *Twilight*. I feel the combat is unique and fun—you're not limited to moving on a grid, allowing fluid, free-form strategy. And while it's true that some battles are indeed hard, I never found 'em frustrating. He's right about the parallel-engaging plot, though: It's absolutely engaging. This 40-hour quest could've really used a few legitimate dungeons to explore, but the narrative and combat alone kept me hooked.

OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAG—SAM:

While I have to agree with Greg about the occasional tricky battles, I guess they don't bother me as much. And I certainly don't think he's going enough credit to the combat—there's lots of strategy involved. Arc had me surprisingly captivated throughout. Mainly because of the interesting story and characters, but also because of the solid graphics and wonderful music. It may not be perfect, but it is the perfect RPG escape for these long summer months.

GRIG S.	SHANE	SAM
6.0	7.0	8.0

Publisher: Sony CIA
 Developer: Gaijin Soft
 Players: 1
 ESRB: Teen

www.gamers.com/1242693

ONLINE Xbox / Also On: None

MOTOGP 2

Kinda like the first one—but that's good



● Bike and rider details, like sponsorship patches and stickers, are now much sharper.

Good: 16-player Xbox Live racing fun
Bad: Beginners, good luck keeping the bike on the track
New for the Fans: Custom-designed liverys



DEMIAN: If you've played THQ's previous MotoGP game—set to be confused with Namco's PS2 series bearing the same name—don't expect any revelatory surprises from *MotoGP 2*. It has six new tracks and an updated roster of cycles and drivers from the 2002 MotoGP season, but perhaps the most noticeable change is bikes that no longer sound like 180 mph weed whackers. So that's a plus. Other cities is the "new for 10" outdoor slightly reimagined game modes (a Stunt mode replaces *Amoeba's* extra difficulty level; three challenges on each track that, if completed, improve your rider; and adjustable power-slide sensitivity).

The tracks are slight, but not a whole lot needed here. *MotoGP 2* remains an intense, unforgiving, but ultimately satisfying racing sim—and the only one of its kind you can play online. While the servers weren't exactly bumping when we hit the track (before the game's on-sale date), we expect the same excellent racing experience the original delivered—but with a lot less cheating, thanks to new strategically

placed walls that make off-road shortcuts impossible. Thank you, *Amoeba!*

GRIG S.: Yup, *Demian's* right—this is pretty much the same game as the first *MotoGP* for Xbox. But since that was my favorite motorcycle racer, it's less by me. I love the way it rewards mastery: Once you learn how to set up for each turn and master the front and rear brakes, your lap times will drop drastically. A high level of rider and bike customization and goodly amount of alternate events to be covered mean you'll be playing this one for quite a while.

RYAN: I'm less of a video game monkey than *Demian* or *Grig*, but I enjoyed *MotoGP 2* all the same. The photo-realistic visuals look amazing, and the Career and Stunt modes considerably reward you with new bikes, riders, tracks, and wacky unlockables (like changing the game's looks with cartoon shading). Aside from the lack of a true tutorial to ease newcomers into the demanding controls, *MotoGP 2* is a worthy sequel.

DEMIAN	GRIG S.	BRYAN
8.5	8.0	8.0

Publisher: THQ
 Developer: Camex UK
 Players: 1-4 (1-16 online)
 ESRB: Everyone

www.gamers.com/130995

● (Right) Motorcycles and cars, the threats of personal-injury lawyers everywhere

EBGAMES™

electronics boutique®

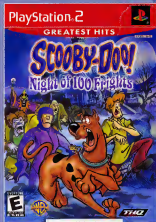
PS2 GREATEST HITS \$19.99 EA.



#21502-2 Activision



#18092-8 Rockstar Games



#21709-8 THQ Inc.



#20033-0 Universal Interactive Studios



#20680-9 Infogrames



#20305-2 Infogrames

CALL 1-800-800-5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU OR VISIT US AT WWW.EBGAMES.COM



Sparky stars and pink triangles didn't even bow as after 150 hours of Saga pain.

■ PlayStation 2 / Also On: None

UNLIMITED SAGA

Unlimited frustration, tedium, and anger

Good: The music, the HD movie, and the PS2 preview
Bad: Fantastically zany gameplay
Might Appeal to Fans of: Watercolor paintings of flowers

JOHN R: The Saga series has always had a reputation for being a little different, with its extremely nonlinear stories and unorthodox role-playing. Over the years the games have become progressively stranger, but nothing could've prepared anyone for the latest installment. To be perfectly frank, this game sucks. Unlimited Saga simplifies everything that's wrong with RPGs today and throws it all together in one deluxe package for all to avoid like the plague.

For starters, exploration in Saga is boring as hell. Towns consist of one screen with a bunch of items to navigate, while dungeons involve you moving your character one space at a time around a grid board. Thrilling, eh? Battles are far too random and tedious to be even remotely enjoyable, which is a serious problem considering how often you fight. And the graphics are terrible. Nearly every area in Saga looks like a cheap painting, and the characters' animations look costworn from the 16-bit era. If you crave something really different, or your name is Scumboby, by all means, give this a rent.

SHANE: Few games have raised such a hateful ire in me. Saga is so fundamentally flawed that it's ridiculous. I'm all for experimenting with new role-playing concepts, but uh, I like to walk in my RPGs. Sorry, moving my party like a Meepley token through ugly metaterrains isn't fun gameplay. The unrelenting narratives, demerble difficulty, and mediocre graphics only drag it further down. A beautiful soundtrack and creative battle system rise to the surface of the ecosystem, but it's still a lost cause.

OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAG—GARY: Wow...this pig of a game ain't fun at all—and really, that's all that counts. Saga is a lot like playing a pen-and-paper RPG using a board game as your map, with the most arbitrary, cruel, and spiteful dungeon master ever. Yet I respect Square for what it's trying to accomplish: This is a bold experiment that ultimately fails, but it fails brilliantly. Next it on, just to experience something different. As a side effect, you'll probably appreciate traditional RPGs like Final Fantasy even more.



■ PlayStation 2 / Also On: Xbox, Game Boy Advance

WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED

Whatboarding?



Wakeboarding is not a crime. Stealing cultural treasures, however, is.

Good: Ingenious level design
Bad: Too similar to Tony Hawk for wans
Keaney Keaney: During Banjo's attack challenge

SHAWN: But aside your extreme-sports snobby for a second and *Motley* may actually appeal to you, imaginative challenges, like leading a captive orca to the open sea and "torrying" stranded livestock to safely complement the first-rate water effects. Of course, even immaculately rendered HD can get tiresome, but look at the screens on this page and you'll see that *Motley* does more than water.

To reach the riverdale boxes and roller coasters brackling the banks, though, you have to part with the horsepower that pulls you. And therein lies one clever-as-hell catch: When you release your towline, you lose momentum, to avoid being stranded and furlough accumulated combos, you have to reconnect to your tether by getting your waterlogged ass back to your boat. Ending your off-the-leash antics with a coordinated rope catch gives your combos a sense of stone-solid completion you won't find anywhere else.

JENNIFER: This game puts no points for creativity whatsoever on, (discovering yet another sport to exploit with the footpuck *Toy Hawk* formula doesn't count). That said, *Motley* is loads of fun and provides that babyish instant gratification every well-temperamented action-sports fan should. Like Shawn, I discovered a new sense of possibility once I learned how to manipulate the physics of that boat-rope combo, and the multiplayer co-op mode where one player drives the boat is way cool. It may be just another Pro-Extreme-Sports like so many that came before, but

that ain't necessarily a bad thing.

JOH D: I've been an action-sports-loving camogiegoer up and now, but damn if this wakeboarding nonsense isn't fun. My Hawk and *Motley* experience has been mostly limited to yelling, "Dude grinding on my rails, ya punk kid!" so this Hawk-derived gameplay is fresh to me. Missing with the boat's towrope opens the first book way the hell up, and I had a blast coming up with my own unique towline maneuvers. Landing the right tricks to complete stages did present a serious challenge—extreme waves like no might want to rent first.



JOHN R.	SHANE	GARY
2.0	4.0	4.0

Publisher: Square Enix
Developer: Square Enix
Project: 1
ESRB: Teen

www.games.com/1160568

SHAWN	JENNIFER	JOH D.
9.0	8.0	7.5

Publisher: Activision 32
Developer: Studio States
Project: 1-2
ESRB: Everyone

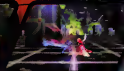
www.games.com/1134708

MEGAMAN NETWORK TRANSMISSION

Mega Man's first adventure
on the Nintendo GameCube!



Story-line tie-in to the Mega Man Battle Network games.



Collect battle chips to stop your enemies & solve puzzles.



Witness special cutscenes from the Mega Man Universe.



Join the Anniversary
BASH



CAPCOM

www.capcom.com/megaman

©CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2002 ©CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 2002. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. DEVELOPMENT BY ARKA CO., LTD. ©CAPCOM, Shogakukan, ShoPro, TV Tokyo 2002. CAPCOM and the CAPCOM logo are registered trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD. MEGAMAN NETWORK TRANSMISSION is a trademark of CAPCOM CO., LTD. TM, © and the Nintendo GameCube are trademarks of Nintendo. ©2002 Nintendo. ©, TM Warner Bros. 2002. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

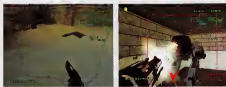
Xbox / Also On: None

ROBOCOP

Part man. Part machine. All crap



Were pretty sure it's illegal to kill bad guys just because they're criminally retarded.



(Left) Remember when RoboCop hunted giant rats in pools of milky sludge? Neither do we.

Snob: Makes RoboCop 3 score not half-bad
Risk: No solid abstract button
Price: Objective: Run from the game.



CRISPIN: Get Terminator on the blower—his baby-look-guzzling fellow cyborg RoboCop needs an intervention. Of chrome dome's first-person shooter suffers more major malfunctions than an AIBO robotdog run through a dishwasher. It starts with a story—some cliché factory orat about a drug named Boardcase—that makes RoboCop 3 seem like...well, RoboCop 1. Then you get the legally insane enemy AI, pulsed visuals, crummy dialogue—the other reviewers will cover these misdeeds. We'll look onto the game's felony crime: It's pile of poorly assembled. Although the levels are the gray kind of neo-cyber settings we saw in the flicks, they feel slugged together. You just dick around for switches and keyboards to reach the next area. Scene doors open. Scenes don't. Even with RoboCop's "advanced" sensors (basically a filter that turns your screen blue), I still got lost and resorted to trial and error. And sensors really need to calibrate "Cop's" targeting sensors. He shoots lock-on bad guys exclusively in their "heads." As if these runskulls didn't have enough grit.

BRYAN: If it's RoboCop's duty to serve and protect innocent civilians, then it's mine to protect you from purchasing this doodie. C'my bucks for what? Nearly handicapped enemies, repetitive mission objectives, and some of the least-entertainingly humorous dialogue ever. One look at the pools of stagnant, diluted milk that pass for water and you'll know what to expect visually. And I'm actually glad this has no multiplayer, since I wouldn't wish this pain on anyone else. Avoid this pile and go buy Metalstorm if you're looking for a new sheeter.

XEN—GREG G: You have the right to remain silent, clumberdast at the thought of having spent so much for so little. You have the right to blast endless poorly animated thugs who won't fire upon RoboCop when he's too feet away. You have the right to shoot crates, pull levers, and collect keywords until boredom becomes your new best friend. You have the right to slog the blues and stare at dull, washed-out levels for the duration. If you give up these rights, well, then bully for you.

CRISPIN	BRYAN	GREG G.
2.5	2.5	3.0

Publisher: This
 Developer: This
 Project: 1
 OS: MSN

www.gamers.com/27244



Slider was made by the developers of F-Zero for GBA, which begs the question: What happened?

GameCube / Also On: None

TUBE SLIDER

Who wants to slide some tube? C'mon, anyone?



It's like a water slide...except there's no water, slides, or fun.

Snob: Vehicles reminiscent of Wacky Races (the cartoon)
Risk: All the other parts
Ward: Rather Play This Original Wipeout



DEMIAN: Tube Slider takes a cynical view of the future...apparently there's nothing better to do than race homemade jugs in big tubes at decidedly sensible speeds. While other postapocalyptic races, like Wipeout and F-Zero, try to entice gamers with speed, sharp controls, more speed, and possibly crazy weapons, Tube Slider doesn't go for all that enticery. It's dog slow, with shallow gameplay and a whole three varieties of power-ups (two of which give you a turbo; the third is an energy boost that, uh, allows you to turbo). But hey, let's not forget, it does have tubes.

Tube Slider's main gimmick—innovation, aside from the tubes, is a tractor beam that siphons energy from racers ahead of you—it works OK and adds a bit of strategy, but it's not worth keeping a game around. A limp techno soundtrack and the most basic array of game modes possible (Tutorial, Grand Prix, Versus, and Time Attack) round out the forgettable experience. By the way, if the future does turn out to involve tube-based racing, I think I speak for Paul and Andrew when I say we'll gonna be pissed.

GUR—ANDREW: Pissed is right. Tube Slider is the NASCAR of the 24th century: boring tracks, boring cars, and boring racing. My biggest problem with it is not knowing where to be on the track for maximum speed—the game obviously encourages tube sliding, so why can't I see the whole tube? And what good is the energy-siphoning system when you're rarely close enough to someone for it to work? After experiencing the pure devaluation that is Tube Slider, Sega's new F-Zero looks even better.

PAUL: Begin with Wipeout. Take away the varied terrain, all the weapons, the thruster/sidekick, and its sharp cool plasma-trail exhaust. Replace them with a tube-sliding system that doesn't work very well, an eye-straining mishmash of backgrounds, and AI drivers who behave like helium balloons in a weak pit. Just for good measure, throw in some weak techno and questionable physics. Roll the whole mess into a tube and give it a name that implies juvenile incoherence. Congratulations, you've created Tube Slider.

DEMIAN	ANDREW	PAUL
3.5	4.5	4.0

Publisher: NEC
 Developer: MCCabo
 Players: 1-4
 OS: Easyway

www.gamers.com/120201



www.koegames.com



Experience the action and excitement of Thoroughbred Racing!



G1 JOCKEY 3

- 10 racetracks with 35 courses including steeplechase races
- 4,000 playable horses with unique characteristics
- Ultimate realism! Changing weather and track conditions, Steward's Inquiries, and falls
- Arcade action! 2-player split-screen racing
- Over 100 rival jockeys

- Start as a rookie and race to the elite G1 class! Compete for the best rides. Learn racing tactics from veteran jockeys. Work your horse into top form, set a racing schedule, and ride to victory!

JUNE 2003

EVERYONE
E Visit www.eub.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for Rating Information.

The Koei logo is a trademark of KOEI Co., Ltd. in Japan and/or other countries. G1 JOCKEY™ 3 is a trademark of KOEI Corporation and KOEI Co., Ltd. © 2003 KOEI Co., Ltd. All rights reserved. PlayStation™ and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

PlayStation 2





▲ *Archie lays down the law with hisa procrastrator for our Evil May Day-Lik level.*

■ PlayStation 2 / Xbox One / None

CHAOS LEGION

Rally a band of otherworldly brothers

Good: Building up your Legion adds depth. **Bad:** Too few enemy types make it repetitive. **Scariest Androids:** Character Database

SHAWN: At first glance, *Chaos Legion* looks suspiciously like its back-and-forth Capcom cousin, *Devil May Cry*. But in reality, it plays like a tactical strategy game that places you in near-complete control of units rather than having you issue orders with icons and cursors.

Considering an entourage of supernatural soldiers is heavy but fulfilling work. Seas of your miniskip specialists in combating mechanical creatures, while others fare better against flesh and blood—so to evade the opposition, you'll need to plan accordingly. Factor in artillery and protective units and the potential for strategy is staggering.

Yet because you do all this while controlling your own character, in reality, you'll need the dexterity of Star Trek's Data to consistently carry out all your calculations. Luckily, this inherent complexity is more rewarding than frustrating—operating your phone is always fun, even though enduring the pandemonium is the most you can hope

for at times. And you can always revisit completed levels, both to refine more-graceful approaches and to gain experience points for legion upgrades—which, for me, ranks high on this game's long list of ingenious features.

JON D: Damn you, Capcom, for stealing the name of my future death-metal band! But bless your heart for attaching it to a gorgeous, action-laden game worthy of the nickname name. *Legion* isn't just mindless meiosis—alikes that grow with experience add the strategy and RPG-ish depth that make playtime fun. But my excitement started to deflate a few stages shy of the end. As the button-mashing ramps up near the too-soon climax, the game miserably recycles the same enemies and bosses over and over. For the few hours you'll spend, *Legion* has "mental" written all over it—Shawn and I try as just easy-to-please gaming geeksies, I guess.

BRYAN: In addition to its lush visuals, *Legion* excels in two areas where most back-and-forshers don't. First, it provides an engaging story (told through beautiful cut-scenes) that kept me on my toes till the very end. Second, as Shawn said, building up each legion's stats keeps the action from feeling monotonous. Sure, some of the dialogue is over-the-top hokey, and the game's Space-like creature collection could be more diverse—but these are really minor problems. I can only hope a sequel is on the way.



■ This massive boss charges its beam more often than Michael Jackson.

■ GameCube / Also On: None

ULTIMATE MUSCLE: LEGENDS VS. NEW GENERATION

So much muscle, it's illegal in Uzbekistan



■ *Wally Tachibana is not as lovable and friendly as his name implies.*

Good: Puts every WWE title in gameplay to shame. **Bad:** Some might find it too cartoony and simplistic. **Best Character Name:** Dik Dik Van Dik

CJ: Even though this is wrestling, it's odder to put *Muscle* in the same ring with *WWE* games. The slow, plodding, and overly technical style of your run-of-the-mill wrestler game is gone, replaced by incredibly fast and fun-as-hell fun games play. The setup here is as it is: you're free, but either to bust out enough over-the-top moves to KO him flat on the mat. As if that isn't a different and welcome enough change, *Muscle*'s cool cartoony visuals, shock-act characters, and absurd plots separate it from the norm even further.

Of course, there are still areas to improve: The *Story mode* is short, there's no outside-the-ring action, some characters' attacks are way too powerful, and the Create-a-Character mode is low on options. But I've grown so tired of the same old never-changing "slim" wrestling games you're after that playing *Muscle* is like taking that first breath of fresh air after a decade of being trapped in a bank vault with the smallest hobo on Earth.

BRYAN: Hulk Hogan, your T-shirt-cupful days are over. Games like *Muscle* prove the WWE's headshaves aren't essential for superior videogame grappling. You won't be disappointed with this game's high-action pace, simple arcade controls, and flamboyant fighters. But, sorry CJ, not being able to pin opponents, brawl outside the ring, or use weapons leaves my excitement to the middle lumberjacks. Even so, *Muscle* whips *WrestleMania XFls* and other clearly challenges *Get Jim Verdette* for the Cube's championship belt.

SHAWN: It neither stars Ben Jerney nor lengthens your map, but *Ultimate Muscle* makes for a satisfying weekend detour. And don't let the cubby box make you after all, *WWE* wrestlers wear their silliness on their forehead and chest pieces, too. But I'll take *Muscle*'s simplistic gameplay over the puntably slow punning of true-to-life alternatives any day. Like the light-hearted nannies of decades past, it's instantly accessible and assistively fast. Simple but effective evasion and countering also offset the limited move lists, and *Muscle*'heads will appreciate the trove of unlockable toys.



Beyond the Mat

You can unlock more characters in *Story mode* by completing it with each New Generation wrestler. Once you've snagged all of those, though, opening the last few requires you to gather more of the collectible *Muscle* figures by cashing in your winnings. A new wrestler will appear when you've reached 100-, 200-, and 300-figure milestones.

SHAWN	JON D.	BRYAN
8.5	6.5	8.5

Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Players: 1
ESRB: Teen

www.gamers.com/1131727

CJ	BRYAN	SHAWN
8.5	7.5	7.5

Publisher: Emerald
Developer: AE
Players: 1-4
ESRB: Teen

www.gamers.com/1132253



INDYCAR SERIES

Featuring the
**INDIANAPOLIS
500**

THE OFFICIAL VIDEO GAME

Featuring the 14 venues of the IndyCar™ Series, including Indianapolis, Texas and Chicagoland.

All the speedway stars, including Sam Hornish Jr., Sarah Fisher and Dario Franchitti.

Up to 32 accurately modelled and visually stunning cars on track at once.

Thrash your rivals in Full Season, Single Race and Multiplayer game modes, plus the legendary Indy 500®.

Refine your racing technique in the IndyCar™ Series Masterclass hosted by Indy 500® winner Eddie Cheever Jr.

Choose your gameplay –
arcade action to hardcore sim.

Create your own driver, and
unlock cool bonus features.

TV-style presentation
and atmosphere.



*"The speed, the sound, the sensation –
this game has it all."
Sam Hornish Jr.*

AVAILABLE MAY

Pre-order your copy online
www.codemastersusa.com



Visit www.esrb.org or
call 1-800-771-3772
for Rating Information



PlayStation 2

Codemasters™

GENIUS AT PLAY™



Wario doesn't need fancy-pants water guns to settle his differences—he employs glittering festivals instead.



GameCUBE Also On: None

WARIO WORLD

Another Nintendo mega-franchise? Not quite



G. FORD: Mario's unscrupulous rival Wario is finally getting his big-time console break, and he's diggin' it. First off, he's a cool character—Mario's goody-two-shoes antics just aren't connecting with the surly, grand thief. Auto-lover? Lots of tools, so a greedy antihero like Wario should be right up their alley. And to inject street cred into the GC debut, Nintendo created the capable action vets at Treasure (makers of *Kangaroo* and the epic *Gunstar Heroes* for Sega Genesis), who've created an inventive, gameplay-rich run-and-jump romp.

As in a Mario game, Wario travels through a wacky 3D world trying to recapture a variety of delightful shiny objects. But this hop-n-bog excursion isn't afraid to blow, pulverizing enemies with his fists, smashing them with subzero plaidrivers, crushing them with his ample behind, and spinning them dizzy. The fighting system proves easy, responsive, and intuitive, and it delivers lots of fun. Even though most enemies are unmemorable, looking the odd out of them never is, and it gets over-

better during the amazing boss battles.

Wario World has a couple flaws, though. Offering only four worlds with two levels in each, the game feels too soon. An ill-advised Continues system compounds the problem, letting you restart from the exact spot you die for a measly 50 coins (I had more than 25,000 by game's end). Wario delivers a great time while it lasts and is well worth checking out. Just don't expect a Mario-quality adventure.

CJ: On the one hand, I like *Wario World*. It feels like an old-school 8-bit Nintendo platformer perfectly reimagined in 3D. The levels are tight, fast, and fun—less about aimless exploration and more about reflex-testing action. But on the other hand, I'm a little disappointed that it's so short and simplistic, and that it doesn't take full advantage of the GC's hardware. Plus, we hardly get to see a hint of Wario's insidiously evil personality (or any humor at all, really). That's forgivable in light of the fun gameplay, but the game's length and super-easy

difficulty aren't. *Wario World* could've been great—as it is, it's just good.

JENNIFER: I'm with CJ on the cool level design, but that's pretty much it. Wario's relentless punching gets real old real fast. Enemies respawn so quickly—move 10 steps and they're double back and you'll generally find the pests back on the attack—that punning them gives you no advantage. I liked the first two worlds when I thought of them as a platformer with braising wheels—just what the Cube kiddies need, right? Well, sort of. About halfway through, the training wheels come off, and your safe neighborhood street becomes an icy mountain road of night—a perilous journey only the most seasoned jumping-puzzle realists (like, apparently, G. Ford and CJ) will enjoy. Plus, the gloriously annoying boss battles had me fuming, hurling away the controller, and shouting obscenities at the screen. *WW* might keep you entertained—if you like that sort of self-fogelating frustration.



Free sample of videorecord. Owners of Game Boy Advance and GC-to-GBA Link Cable get a root bonus in Wario World. Carbine Insurance Wario finds allow you to transfer a trial level of the stunningly brilliant Mario War: Arc to your GBA. Well, if you already own Wario it's a good point, but these demos will likely lock some new mirtgamers.

Fun on a colossal scale

The boss-battling masters at Treasure deliver a pantheon of easily accessible end-of-level boss.



Treasure's platform games are renowned for offering plentiful escalators with massive, challenging bosses. *Wario World* doesn't disappoint. Granted, some are less-than-inspired and annoying (like The Mean Snow of level 4-1), but others get pretty intense—like the first world's behemoth, DinoMighty (pictured). And unlike in Treasure's bargain-bin stretch piece for PS2, the levels before each boss are pretty darned fun, too.



Good: Chase, action-packed gameplay
Bad: Not nearly long enough
Battles: Fight 'em to 'em; repeat the battles



G. FORD

7.5

CJ

7.0

JENNIFER

6.0

Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Treasure
Players: 1
ESRB: Everyone

www.games.com/1153316

Wer ist Deine Mutti?
(Translation: Who's your mommy?)



\$5 OFF

Return to Castle Wolfenstein

Cashier Instructions: Scan coupon UPC. Scan qualifying product UPCs. Scan all other products being sold. Press "Next" Select "Yes" to apply package pricing. Write "R03" on the coupon and place in the register coupon reader file.

© 2003 Best Buy



00054 53608
(5453608)



Good only at Best Buy retail stores in the United States. Not good in combination with other coupons or offers. Limit one coupon per title per customer. Not valid on prior purchases. Void on in-stock items only. No cash. Coupon must be presented at time of purchase. No copies. Coupon value is 1/100 of one cent. Good through 7/6/03.



Expects an Adult Rating



Return To Castle Wolfenstein and all the games you're into,
and everything to play them on.

BestBuy.com

★ GAME OF THE YEAR



• The bigger they are, the harder they beat the crap out of you.

■ Xbox / Also On: GameCube  

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE: EPISODE I & II

Still addictive, now with voices in your head

Good: Voice chat makes this the best PS2 yet that's split-screen in almost fully voiceless. **Don't Play With:** "EGLHAW"—it's gruddy times 10.

SHIE: Mindless, repetitive, pointless story line...yet this action-RPG has managed to keep me enthralled for triple-digit hours' worth of gameplay through four versions now. Am I insane? Perhaps, but PSO fills that intrinsic gamer need to level up characters and feel better and rarer items. It does this particularly well because of its slick graphics and cooperative online format (as well as deathmatch shooters, it's so easy to get hooked when playing with friends). Just be warned that this addiction doesn't come cheap: You have to pony up the bucks for the game, Xbox Live, and a monthly fee (although in true drug-dealer style, Microsoft will give you the first two months free). It's worth it—as opposed to previous PSOs, you can voice chat here, which improves cooperative play loads. Once you get used to the slight lag, you'll never want to Phantomize with one hand on the keyboard again.

If you won't be going online, pass on PSO; split-screen (with bad camera angles) and an incomplete interface) and single-player don't offer the same buzz.

CJ: After logging a ton of hours in three prior versions, you'd think I'd be sick of cleaving Rago's picturesque forests of Rappas by now. But like the other guys, I find PSO so addictive and fun to play that I just can't say no—and this Xbox incarnation is the best yet. Being able to use voice chat instead of stop-and-go typing improves gameplay so much that I request all future online RPGs to offer me support. PSO is precisely the killer app Xbox Live needed. See you online!

MARK: To paraphrase Michael Corleone, "Just when I thought I was out of PSO, it pulls me back in." With so many ways to customize and improve your character (gain levels; feed new armor, weapons, and spells; boost your MG robot sidekick), this wildly addictive game as once again keeping me up all night—even two years after I first started playing it. Gripe? I have a few: Some graphics still pop into view, and the camera is spikier than a crocodile. Still, voice chat makes this, by far, the best version of an already amazing experience.

Personality Check: Here are the types of players you'll encounter online.

					
New Guy: Will be your pal and share treasure and money. Great to play with.	Brandy: One of the nerds for the records but doesn't even if he doesn't need you.	Leaver: Actually plays and demands that you stop his character.	Agnost: Is just here to bother you. Won't do it if he has something to do.	Meth-head: Can't play without his shiny. Find us. Please. Won't quit.	Militarist: Takes care of Mine but not his pals. Four words—Ward—ack!

SHOE	CJ	MARK
9.0	9.0	9.0

Publisher: Microsoft
Developer: Square Enix
Players: 1-4 (split-screen or online)
ESRB: Teen
www.gamers.com/1068679



• Scared anyone else of The Mouse of the Dead?

■ PlayStation 2 / Also On: None

RESIDENT EVIL: DEAD AIM

Misses the mark

Good: Gooey atmosphere. **Bad:** Too easy and short. **Still Way Better Than:** Resident Evil: Survivor (PS1)

MARK: If there's one area where this Resident Evil shooter is right on target, it's atmosphere. The undead shamble into the dim glow of your flashlight in creepy effect stolen from Silent Hill, lurching with eerily realistic animations. Shoot them just right and you'll blast zombies close off their feet, blood splattering and smearing all over the walls. You can see why, despite its lack of storage boxes and (unfortunately) any real puzzles, Dead Aim nails that spooky Resident Evil vibe; it's too bad that, as a light-gun shooter, it's so far off the mark. The new stealth aspect—enemies don't attack until they see or hear you—is an interesting idea, but in practice it adds little technique. Actually, along with the fact that your installed components can't open doors or handle stairs, it further encourages simply running past the bad guys—the most effective and least enjoyable way of playing the game. Other disappointments include nondescript backgrounds (windows don't even shatter), precious few moments in which aiming or timing is necessary, and little reason for replay (despite a playtime of under three hours).

awards? Nope. The ability to blow off zombies? Imho? Not here. Some puzzles, or a two-player mode at least? Buzz. The result? A game you really don't need to play.

CRISPIN: Snerk...snerk...huh...whoa? It's my turn to chime in? Sorry, but the near total lack of horror in this survival-horror gun game bored me plenty to sleep. I'm not sure what zombie Love Boat Mark was on, because Dead Aim's cruise ship and water-treatment plant locales are just so...dead. Most of the blood corridors and rooms look alike, turning much of the game into a zombie trot through a maze full of zombies you can easily blow right past. Of course, you'll get maximum enjoyment if you play with a light gun, but the bosses and story are strictly low caliber. OK, back to bed.

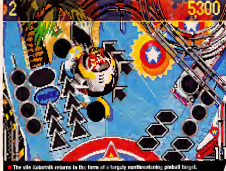
JOHN R: With all the advances in gameplay and technology that we've seen over the years, you'd think Capcom would be able to come up with a light-gun game that involved more than just shooting the same three or four enemies through the same dull, repetitive environment for three hours. Dead Aim brings absolutely nothing new to the genre. Destructible



■ Fighting a boss while a timer counts down? In a Resident Evil game? No way!

MARK	JOHN R.	CRISPIN
5.0	4.0	4.0

Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Players: 1
ESRB: Mature
www.gamers.com/266508



The vile Zomboid enters in the form of a largely customizable pinball target.

■ Game Boy Advance / Also On: None

SONIC PINBALL PARTY

Sonic + balls + your pocket = party



■ You'll fling your balls through a variety of tables based on the series' most memorable levels.

Goal: Awesome table variety
Bad: Overly difficult level
Sonic Team Tease: What's the new N64 game?



SHANE: No videogame can truly re-create the intoxicating mix of flashing lights, satisfying physics, and smoky back-alley sleaze that typifies a real-life arcade pinball experience. So all virtual pinball games should do what *Sonic does here*—evade the deal by offering tons of different tables, meringues, and bonus features.

With a handful of unique Sonic-themed tables, a few based on *Nights Into Dreams* (Sega Saturn), and even a wildly fun *Samba de Amigo* (Dreamcast) stage, it's damned near impossible to get bored here. Plus, in addition to the quick thrills of the Arcade mode and the sizable challenge of the Story mode (beating Metal Sonic requires mad Rippa dexterity that John and Jen evidently lack), you can spend the rags you earn in a variety of zany *Cosmopolis* meringues. Still want more zany distractions? Link up with some friends and engage in fun multiplayer games like *Hockey* and *Hot Potato* (all with only one cartridge, to boot). All told, *Sonic* kept my GBA happily buzzin' through many bus trips and comes highly recommended.

JOHN R: It's hard to get terribly excited about new pinball games these days, but of those currently available for GBA, *Sonic Pinball Party* is definitely my top pick.

Sonic's tables aren't especially innovative, but they do offer quite a bit of variety, and the gameplay is fast-paced and fun. Also, the Story mode makes for a nice touch, though it's too brief, honestly. And serious pinballs may want to lower the volume, as the sound effects are rather disappointing, but everything else in *Sonic* is good to go.

JENNIFER: *Sonic* achieves a nice balance: With solid pinball play, it evokes memories of simpler times while still offering up fun little multiplayer game and surprising unlockable meringues. Also, I truly dig the rockin' music and cool graphics. But I never achieved pinball bliss: The menu interface keeps you from being able to restart new games quickly, and the time limit in some Story mode stages just seems positively difficult. *Nonstop* will be stuck on that second battle for way too long—not fun.

SHANE	JOHN R.	JENNIFER
8.0	7.5	7.0

Publisher: Sega
 Developer: Sonic Team
 Players: 1-4
 ESRB: Everyone

www.gamers.com/1301071

Concept: Chuck A. McClellent



Computer Arts

2D & 3D Animation | 3D Modeling
 Character Design | Computer Graphics
 Digital Imaging | Filmmaking | Game Design
 Visual Effects | Web Design | And more...

AA | BFA | MFA Degrees
 Portfolio Development | Online Programs

Apply Now for Fall, Spring & Summer Semesters
 High School Scholarships & Teacher Grants Available



AcademyOfArtCollege
 SAN FRANCISCO

1.800.544.ARTS | www.academyart.edu
 79 New Montgomery St., San Francisco, CA 94105
 Nationally Accredited by ACICS, NASAD & FIDER
 Founded in 1929

Game Boy Advance / Also On: Super NES

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY

DK's banana horde is looking a little overripe



■ An amazing awesac level? That's spelled F-B-W



■ These graphics once set the gaming world ablaze. Now, not so much.

Good: Country fans can revisit the antiquated basketball ball: This Donkey's character is no for the big-end-crack! set.
True Bad: Not been kind to the game's once-end worlds.



CJ: When *Donkey Kong Country* first came out on the Super NES nine years ago, everyone (including myself) loved it because of its newfangled "rendered" graphics. But time has made DK's nostalgic wack effects wear off, and I now see it as an average platformer filled with gimmicky nonsense, collect-a-thon gameplay, and some of the laziest characters ever.

Look at the screenshots here—remember when you thought this looked incredible? The enemies, with their can't-be-more-than-two-frames-of-animation, just look ridiculous now, and the silly-as-bases-are-even-worse. The gameplay hasn't aged gracefully, either. Most of DKC's levels have some maze, or unlock them, like run-away scenarios or shooting DK out of a barrel. As if the memorization-based gameplay wasn't already annoying, the screen has been cropped to fit the GBA. Now, you'll wrestle with unfair blind jumps and amuse enemies...enough to make you want to throw your GBA at the nearest wall.

My advice: Keep those fond DKC memories intact by not playing it again.

G. FORD: It's probably better to revisit this *Country* via nostalgic SNES memories than by actually re-playing it. Besides the graphics, which (despite CJ's whining) still look good, the game has not held up well. Sure, the minicart riding and barrel hopping remain nicely fun, but you can only spell "Kong" so many times before the thrill disappears. There's probably enough fun here to warrant one play-through, but only if you've already conquered the comparably lawless *Alto* Advances.

CRISPIN: CJ and G. Ford are spanking these monkeys too hard. Yeah, DKC is kiddy, has weak bosses, and suffers from very stupid character design (although the animation is slick—again, don't listen to CJ). But despite all that, the game offers more variety than the zilch other no-noo side-scrollers on GBA. Nearly every level has its own twist—minicarts, swinging vines, battle-loving stoplights, etc. It adds up to a fun, challenging time, although the busy backgrounds make play on the beckett GBA SP a must.

CJ	G FORD	CRISPIN
5.0	6.0	7.0

Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Rare/N64
Players: 1-2
Rating: Everyone

URL: www.gamers.com/117240



■ His *State of Emergency* with the contents of an unethical toilet and you'll love *Boomstick*.

PlayStation 2 / Also On: Xbox

EVIL DEAD: A FISTFUL OF BOOMSTICK

Proof that videogames do incite violence



■ Adoration Vulture averages his state father by attacking waves of rotund zombies.

Good: Since Campbell's sporadically funny quips.
Bad: Super-boring puzzles.
Legal Note: Demand indemnity for use in POW interrogations.



SHAWN: Playing *Boomstick* is more exciting than having your splintered arm shot and being force-fed grapes. Honestly, I would've paid to not play this game. Counterintuitive puzzles also screw heads out of a single level but fail to create even the illusion of progress. What seemed to be part of an infinite regress until nothing short of a phone call to the game's producer for help cut and your agency (which, I did you not, as what I learned to).

When it comes to making sense on the increasingly Diablos *boomstick*, you'd assume a sword-off shotgun, diamond-toothed chainsaw, and Bruce Campbell's canned one-liners would suffice. Instead, you're repeatedly bloodied and slain by countless cheap shots. And if you didn't tap one of your limited save tokens, it's back to square *boomstick* or, *Pointlessly* retracing steps of ill-conceived puzzles and memorizing cut-scenes I couldn't skip only multiplied my misery. Pay someone who hates you 20 bucks to help your car keys instead.

XEN—GREG B: This sugar, baby, tastes oddly like *Ign Dogg Surprise*—and we ate it so you don't have to. *Horz Ash*, normally a kick-ass brawler, has been turned into a mere errand boy in this frustrating *Boomstick*. He has to perform numerous dull fetch quests, but since none of the game's environments has a map, you'll have no solid idea where to go. Ammo and health packs are limited, too, ensuring Ash is only suited for either running away or dying. *Duck. Hell to the stick.*

DEMIAN: I don't expect a high degree of believability from my *Evil Dead* games, but when a zombie-like *boomstick* tiger gives up shotgun shells when killed, well, the impulse to set the controller down and walk away is irresistible. Shawn and Greg outlined the game's major faults—but I'd like to hear a little more scum on the combat system. Who needs combs or special mazes? Not us, apparently, it's more fun to run away, attack briefly, and then run again. Not even Ash's signature double grenades can save this thing.

SHAWN	GREG B.	DEMIAN
2.0	3.0	3.0

Publisher: THQ
Developer: WS Interactive
Players: 1
Rating: Mature

URL: www.gamers.com/114823

If you bought all
these games, it
would cost about
\$186.



**Why not try them all first in the
Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine
for less than \$10?**



PLAYABLE DEMOS

- MLB 2004
- NBA STREET VOL. 2
- DYNASTY WARRIORS 4
- FREAKY FLYERS

REPLAY

- GUNGRAVE
- WWE SMACKDOWN!
SHUT YOUR MOUTH
- SLY COOPER AND
THE THIEVIUS RACCOONUS
- STAR WARS CLONE WARS
- TIGER WOODS PGA
TOUR 2003
- TERMINATOR:
DAWN OF FATE
- MINORITY REPORT

INSIDE THE GAME

- INSIDE THE GAME
- DOWNHILL DOMINATION
- LARA CROFT: TOMB RAIDER-
ANGEL OF DARKNESS
- WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED
FEATURING SHAUN MURRAY

EXTRAS

- DEV 101: GAME DESIGN AND
DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS

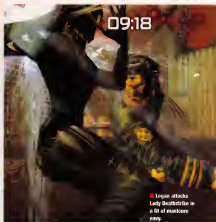
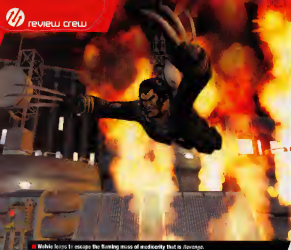
VIDEOS

- SYPHON FILTER:
THE OMEGA STRAIN
- FINDING NEMO
- GLADIUS
- HUNTER: THE RECKONING-
WAYWARD

**LOOK FOR DISK 70 IN THE JULY 2003 ISSUE OF
OFFICIAL U.S. PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE ON SALE NOW!**

DISC 70 PRESENTED BY OFFICIAL U.S. PLAYSTATION
MAGAZINE AND PLAYSTATION UNDERGROUND

 **PlayStation**
MAGAZINE



Wolverine keeps trying to escape the flaming mass of madness that is Revenge.

Logan attacks Lady Deathstrike in a fit of madhouse rage.

PlayStation 2 / Also On Xbox, GC

X2: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE

A slight cut above most steaming coils of comic-book-based crap

SHAWN: If as a kid you used kitchen utensils to pulverize Logan's claw strikes, you're in for some letters-wed gaming. No other X-Men game so fully realizes the Gonzohead's many talents or captures the character's essential badassness as well as *Revenge* does. I rarely tire of springing from the shadows to disembowel unwary watchmen. And while most of the levels are set in a visually drab military complex, there's enough diversity in their design to keep things exciting.

But several problems keep *Revenge* from being a stellar action game instead of a semiregular use of licensed material. The boss battles epitomize most of the game's shortcomings: It's obvious that butchering superbes was meant to require improvisation, yet the correct approach always feels certified, such as maiming Sabertooth midstep. And long after you identify your adversary's weakness, you'll keep combating uncooperative controls, continue after continue, before claiming victory. The same quality-control prob-

lems carry over to the stealth missions—there's rarely more than a single intended path to circumvent booby traps, and shadow kills, though rewarded, are only sporadically necessary. When secrecy is a must, the stoody AI insists you follow its hard-and-fast rules rather than showing any real creativity. It may be the best there is at what he does, but Wolverine still has a few gaming lessons to learn.

OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAG—CHRIS B: It's a good thing I don't have adamantium claws myself—I don't have a good chance they'd have taken out a few controllers as I played *Revenge*. This game is tough...but usually for the wrong reasons. I can't help feeling I would have had a much easier time getting through it if the shoddy combat—especially redoubtable damn boss fights—had received a little more attention. What's with making me awkwardly hold down L2 to stay in Stealth mode? Also, while the game looks all

right, the environments look dead. Despite those shortcomings, I still had a genuinely good time playing as one of my comic-book heroes—but it's by no means a great game. Logan's debut followers should give it a rental.

JOE: A comic fan couldn't ask for a better story line or cast of characters in a Wolverine game, but unlike Chris, I wouldn't even recommend *Revenge* as a rental. It's unacceptably hard, with save points so few and far between, you'll definitely relate to Wolverine when he goes into a Berserker Rage. I'm a pretty even-tempered cat, but I came close to exorcising my television several times—it's that frustrating. I was even forced to replay a half-hour stretch of the game six times. Ugh.

There are good ideas behind Wolverine's stealth gameplay, but his mutant powers are poorly implemented and the game centers will simply stay you. Don't be fooled by its excellent production values—it's just beautiful junk.



Beast Battle Cauterize: Each boss fight is more infuriating than the last, but we guarantee that after dealing his cheap ass, you'll want to buy a Sabertooth action figure just so you can force-feed it to a garbage disposal. (Save yourself an hour of tedious trial and error by executing a Strike move as he trips at your head.)

X-Men Xtras
There are plenty of unobnoxious ways to keep patient gamers playing. Here's some of the essential ones.

Strike Attacks: Quick kills earn you dog tags. Grab 10 tags to learn a new combo.

Costumes: Search the level for costumes from Wolverine's classic wardrobe.

Cauterize: You can also uncure viruses in X-Men's mutant encyclopedia.

The lurking Wolverine: Head near the health bar can help you do it without being spotted.

Beast: Explains Wolverine's other, often overlooked talents.
Bob Roth: Names boss battles.
Lady Deathstrike: Isn't that as hot as the back's hoochie-moochie?



SHAWN	CHRIS B.	JOE
5.5	5.5	4.0

PUBLISHED: Activision
DEVELOPER: Geniepool/Hurting
PLATFORM: PS2
ESRB: Teen

www.games.com/97720



■ If you think this racing looks sweet, leagues riding it to a Muzium soundtrack!

■ Xbox / Also On: PlayStation 2, GameCube 

BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT

Creating 20-car pileups for fun and profit

Good: Risky road system
Bad: No licensed cars
The Cure For: Sundry drivers

G. FORD: Reviewing *Burnout 2* for GameCube last month, I got my first taste of the series and was totally blown away. I've always enjoyed good arcade racers (with fond memories of *SF Rush* for N64), and *Burnout 2* is this generation's king. It jumps starts the genre with a vicious kick to the tooth—an ingenious risk/reward system that gives you boosts for pulling stunts like dodging traffic, catching air, and drifting.

Xboxers luck out with the most polished *Burnout* yet, and a handful of thoughtful tweaks will inspire envy in PS2 and GC vets. On the other consoles, after unlocking these cars or so, you earn a practically mazed-out car, giving you no incentive to use weaker unlockables. Now, new cars gradually appear in various areas, so you'll actually want to check out each successive ride. The other big improvement: music. This Xbox revision gives you a wider soundtrack selection (jams are at least bearable, if not enjoyable). Plus, you can rip your own tunes into the game. In all, this is the best version of an already addictive experience.

BRYAN: Shame on me for waiting so long to try out this glorious racer. *Burnout 2*'s karmic driving had me hooked—I couldn't stop until I'd unlocked every vehicle and course in the single-player campaign. Multiplayer is also a blast, and the Crash magazines are superaddictive. The Xbox Live score-ranking feature is barely worth mentioning, though. Hopefully, a sequel will offer real online action (and licensed cars). Wish list aside, if Ford's comments and mine don't convince you to play *Burnout 2*, then shame on you.

PAUL: *Burnout 2* will thrill lead-footed gamers with its awesome boost system and wicked sense of speed. It's a great game with some rough edges, like occasionally rubbery physics and an irritating parade of recap screens after every damn race. Unlike G. Ford, I think the car selection remains weak. There's always one ride that clearly trumps the rest. Music doesn't really affect gameplay, but the Xbox's ability to play the Procs (or even Fosors) while you compete is a nice addition to this swift arcade racer.



G. FORD	BRYAN	PAUL
8.5	8.5	7.5

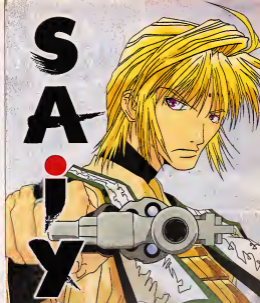
Publisher: Activision
Developer: Criterion Games
Players: 1-4
ESRB: Everyone

www.games.com/6243

S A

i Y U K

i



THE JOURNEY BEGINS INCLUDES 5 EPISODES, A BONUS POSTER AND COPIOUS DVD EXTRAS
ALSO AVAILABLE IN A SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION WITH AN EXCLUSIVE T-SHIRT AND A CUSTOM ART BOX

APRIL 2003

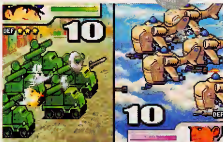


WWW.ADVFILMS.COM

■ Game Boy Advance / Also On: None

ADVANCE WARS 2: BLACK HOLE RISING

War: Who is it good for?



■ The classic Army vs. Air Force rivalry gets out of hand: see-fins.



■ (Left) Some levels let you fire wide-area missiles. (Right) Scope out stylish user-created maps.



■ (Left) Heavy getting out? (Center) Loose from the Revolution? Others a pain.

■ Xbox / Also On: GameCube

BLOODY ROAR EXTREME

This ailing beast needs a trip to the vet



■ Images courtesy of The Fox network's *Shin Animeki Attack!*

Goal: The Campaign mode now has much more variety.
Bad: Basic gameplay has hardly changed.
Hardware: The first contrast. Nowbies need not apply.



SHOE: This war is one hollow mood bog. Veterans from the first *AW* will be a little disappointed that the designers poured all of their energy into making the Campaign mode more interesting, and almost none into making new units, which would greatly spice up the gameplay. How hard would it have been to rip off ideas from any other strategy title, like borrowing tanks or demolition crews? As it is, the dōjo vs. in *AW2* hits you like a 40-megaton bomb. Even the new walking tank unit and super-powers don't freshen up the experience. Is *AW2* meant more for first timers, then?

Luckily, that Campaign mode is one fantastic peace offering. Fans will dig the insane variety—from explosive volcanoes to objectives involving pocket-sized weapons of mass destruction, and more. The later stages are tough, though—so tough that you really have to play through them with the exact strategic plan the designers had in mind, you almost feel like a rat in a brain-scrambling maze. Halfway through *AW2*, nonhardcore players will give up and go AWOL.

BRYAN: *Shō's* dead-on about how little has changed from the first *AW*. The sequel packs the same simple visuals and strategy system, but I think the reworking gameplay's even better this time around. Trust me when I say you'll work your noodle overtime commanding troops and plotting the best routes to score enemy bases. Diverse mission objectives spice up solo play, and challenging (and usually losing to) strategy gurus like *Shōe* in multiplayer still rocks. Military analysts predict that *AW2* is about to invade my personal GBA library.

JOE: If you loved *Advance Wars*, you need to play *Advance Wars 2*, and if you missed the best game, this is a great place to start. It's incredibly fun and super-addictive. Be warned, though, it's hard. And I mean hard to the point where if you make one wrong move, it might be best just to start a round completely over. Still, it's very worth the sweat and effort you'll invest plowing through its tactical depths. Just be prepared to ignore work, school, and loved ones for awhile. A long while.

SHOE	BRYAN	JOE
8.0	8.0	8.5

Publisher: Nintendo
 Developer: Intelligent Systems
 Players: 1-4 (Link or Int. Split)
 ESRB: Everyone
[www.gamers.com/12346233](http://www gamers.com/12346233)

Goal: Pull-to-broke characters are so bad they're good.
Bad: Jerry the Bat is naughty.
SHO: Better than: *Kikkō Chōjū*



PAUL: Contrary to its name, *Bloody Roar Extreme* is ancient, mellow, and mild. As in the series' previous games, fighters begin as humans and transform into beat beasts madout to tear each other apart with claws and fangs. That action could make a fine fighter, but *BRR* is eclipsed by stylistic and technical failures.

First off, you'll find a particularly motley (and embarrassing) crew of brawlers here. The Dragonfire, Rabbit, and Cat-girl look downright ridiculous next to more toothsome competitors like the Wolf and Lion. And why include losers like the Mole and the insect before nature's better fighters? Laughable characters aside, this game just ain't fun. It's so simple that even experienced players fare better pounding one button than trying to execute combos or reversals. I had *Arcade Omega (NES)* flashbacks when my characters refused to face their opponents. The lack of moves lists in Training mode, absurdly cheap A.I. opponents, and dull arenas make *BRR* even harder to enjoy. Even the tykes for whom it's intended should avoid the shambles.

SHAWN: Why visit this unaccredited zoo of mediocrity when you can get more satisfying thrills from the non-fury stars of *DOA2* or the upcoming *Soul Calibur II*? *BRR*'s sickly critters are so sloppy that strategy is moot—pecking a single button produces screwball strings, shoddy subsequence results in beats that bore more than they beg, and throw skip jarringly into great cut-scenes. You can't expect skilled grace from animals, but where's the ferocity and guile? *Bloody Roar's* keepers beat clean the cage quick if they want any visitors.

GAMERON—SUSHI-X: I am usually at peace in the world of beasts, but *BRR* is something else entirely. Its goofy characters and lackluster environments pale compared to those in other Xbox fighters. And the simplistic button mashing combat modes the natural ferocity, grace, and patience that my real-life animal friends once channeled into my deadly mental stances. Infected by *BRR*'s mediocrity, I now move in large, predictable ways, and require months of meditation and fasting to regain my power.

PAUL	SHAWN	SUSHI-X
4.0	5.0	4.0

Publisher: Bandai
 Developer: Hudson Soft
 Players: 1-2
 ESRB: Teen
www.gamers.com/1361363



Gohan learns his martial arts skills against a dizzying horde of wild beasts and snakes.

■ **Game Boy Advance** / Also On: None

DRAGON BALL Z: LEGACY OF GOKU II

More of the same, if you know what I'm Saiyan



■ (Left) Sated by our mediocre reviews of his new adventures, Gohan jumps off a cliff.



Good: Play as five of the most popular DBZ characters
Bad: Too much random wandering and boring fighting
Covers: The Xbox, Arcade, and GBA ports



CJ: Like its predecessor, *Legacy of Goku I* has a lot going for it—impressive visuals, a decent soundtrack, and hordes of beloved DB characters that will no doubt seduce it to the Z franchise. But underneath the surface, it suffers from a few annoying problems. For starters, while this is a longer quest than the original *Legacy*, its length is mostly due to having to level up a Saiyan warrior like Piccolo really spend half an hour killing woodland creatures to gain experience? I don't think so. And the combat strikes—attacks often look like they're striking the air, yet they still somehow manage to connect. Still, padding out the gameplay even further is a backlog of fetch quests, like the unbearably complicated task of getting Gohan past a crowd of people, which involves feeding a sandwich, a newspaper, an antique record, and a crushed school bus in order to start a parade. Hey, wait... couldn't Gohan just, ya know, fly over? Unless you're a huge DBZ fan already, you'll probably want to skip the *Legacy*.

SHAWN: Why are Super Saiyans running endless errands for every schmuck they encounter? Every minute squandered fetching autographs and snack food is time I couldn't spend saving the world. And if I really do possess the power to annihilate whole planets, why couldn't I keep a few stray dogs at bay? Seriously, for most of the game, as I wasn't being someone's bitch, I was running scared from pissant critters. The overarching plot is pitifully epic and the graphics are fine, but plodding puzzles and problem-fraght combat guarantee frustration in this ludicrous quest.

JOHN R: Despite its numerous flaws and noticeably short length, I somehow managed not to utterly despise the first *Legacy* game. This sequel is definitely better, yet it still suffers from many of the same fundamental problems. Most notably, the shoddy hit detection makes fighting enemies highly frustrating. On the good side, the graphics and sound are very solid, and the controls match better. As a DBZ RPG it suffers, but doesn't particularly impress.

CJ	SHAWN	JOHN R.
5.5	5.0	6.0

Publisher: Bandai
Developer: Westwood Technologies
Platform: GBA
ESRB: Everyone

www.gamers.com/13040

REVIEWS WRAP-UP

Slipping through the cracks of gaming



In addition to the games our Crew judged this month, a few other titles will stealthily creep onto store shelves in the coming weeks. We had a chance to check them out, but due to space constraints, global marketing concerns, and the mysterious power of suspects we weren't able to give 'em full reviews. Here's a quick look.

Chessmaster

First off, we've always loved the Chessmaster himself—the wild-eyed hobo whose face has graced every Chessmaster box since we were young. He's a slurring archetype for every filthy psycho you see playing street chess. But Saff's PS2 game is distinctly worthy of his man—*it offers blither*—3D-animated pieces, online play, and dialogue from a chess wiz. Plus, it's only 20 bucks.



Shrek Super Party

When we asked CJ (who suffered through the Xbox version in *IGN #163*) to play the GameCube version of TDK's *Super Party*, he replied simply, "F*** yes." Apparently, this find is unprofitable, and he advises that even devoted Shrek fans avoid it at all costs and buy *Mario Party 4* instead.

High Heat MLB Baseball 2004

Since the PS2 and Xbox versions of 3DO's *High Heat* ranked as our favorite baseball sims this year, we're pleased to announce that their GameCube cousin is just as great. You'll have to look past the slightly lame visuals, but the awesome gameplay and bottomless statistical depth make it the series baseball fan's best bet.

G1 Jockey 3

It seems that every month's Wrap-Up is



contractually obligated to feature at least one horse-racing sim. And Koel's *G1 Jockey 3* for PS2 is over a tiny bit better than last month's *Gallop Rider*, since *G1* has over 4,000 unique horses! Seriously, check it out if you dig the horses.

Also, a few games we expected to review never made it to the party: *Enter the Matrix*, *The Hulk*, and *Shrek Raider: Angel of Darkness* all failed to arrive in time for judgment. They'll all be set by the time you read this (well, except *Shrek Raider*). The Ask and Matrix publishers claimed that review copies weren't available because they contained sensitive movie assets, so you'll be tracking into the unknown if you buy down the aisle.

Meanwhile, Lara Croft's true fate remains entirely shrouded in mystery.

■ (Left to right) The Chessmaster will take your game and your wallet, don't ESRP for Shrek's Party, and G1 Jockey fills your wallet equine fantasies.



REVIEW ARCHIVE

A second look at notable releases from days gone by



- Jack Part 2: Mutation** PS2 (Also On: None) 6.5, 6.5, 8.0
 ■ An average RPG with a neat concept—you play in a virtual online world gone berserk
- Apax** XB (Also On: None) 8.0 **Silver**
 ■ You don't just haul ass in the racer—you build your own autos and run a car factory
- Auto Modellista** PS2 (Also On: None) 5.0, 5.5, 7.0
 ■ Crappy handling ruins a gorgeous-looking online racer
- Batman: Dark Tomorrow** GC (Also On: XB) 2.0, 1.5, 1.0 **Shame**
 ■ Gaming's answer to the box-office heist/fiasco *Batman and Robin*
- BMX XXX** XB (Also On: PS2, GC) 2.5, 3.0, 3.5
 ■ Less about strippers than it is about making you play a stripped-down *Dave Mirra* clone
- Burnout 2: Point of Impact** PS2 (Also On: GC) 8.5, 8.0, 8.5 **Silver**
 ■ The sequel to this arcade racer faces a lot of the issues we had with the original
- Capcom vs. SNK 2: EO** XB (Also On: PS2, GC) 7.5, 7.5, 9.0 **Silver**
 ■ Xbox Live is the real draw in this lightning fan's dream come true
- Confessions: Aria of Sorrow** GBA (Also On: None) 9.5, 9.0, 9.5 **Gold**
 ■ With its excellent soul-stealing system, *Aria* outclasses its forerunners
- Conflict: Desert Storm** 5.5, 5.5, 6.5
 GC (Also On: PS2, XB)
 ■ Co-op combat nearly saves the day
- Dark Cloud 2** 8.0, 8.0, 9.5 **Silver**
 PS2 (Also On: None)
 ■ An addictive action-RPG with a sim beast
- Dev Jaro: Vendetta** 7.0, 6.5, 7.5
 PS2 (Also On: GC)
- Devil May Cry 2** PS2 (Also On: None) 7.0, 7.0, 8.0
 ■ Dante and hotie-in-head Lucia blast through a creaky plot in this too-easy sequel



■ *Aria of Sorrow* has generic awesyn.

■ Hip-hop stars and wrestling actually works. Word to your mother.

greatest hit or miss?

PS2

STUNTMAN

Publisher: Interzone
 Developer: Interzone
 Originally Released: June 2002

Original Scores: 8.5, 4.5, 6.5

Maybe more of a full-on than a full-on. Stuntman's full-on lies up to most gamers' lofty expectations. Despite its pedigree with the multi-popular *Demolition Derby* and *Demolition Derby* didn't quite—choppy visuals, sluggish controls, and unforgiving difficulty leech most of the fun from this Hollywood stunt-driving sim.

- Dead or Alive: Xtreme Beach Volleyball** XB (Also On: None) 7.5, 8.0, 6.0
 ■ Scooters are working to invent a nude code for this beach sport's bouncing air-jinjos
- Dragon Ball Z: Budokai** PS2 (Also On: None) 8.0, 7.5, 7.0
 ■ *Budokai* stands above any of the previous attempts to turn the series into a fighter
- Dragon Ball Z: Ultimate Battle 22** PS1 (Also On: None) 2.0, 1.5, 2.0
 ■ Someone crapped in a jewel case and passed it off as a DS2 game
- Dynasty Warriors 4** PS2 (Also On: None) 7.5, 7.0, 8.5
 ■ Close warriors in obscure settings snacking on dim sum and severing heads
- EverQuest Online Adventures** PS2 (Also On: None) 7.5, 5.0, 6.0
 ■ Ugly visuals hampered our online quest for fun
- The Getaway** PS2 (Also On: None) 7.5, 6.0, 8.0
 ■ It looks like a GTA clone but plays like a *Gay Ritchie* flick, complete with raunchy words
- Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters Melee** GC (Also On: XB) 7.0, 7.0, 7.5
 ■ Ugly visuals hampered our online quest for fun
- Grand Theft Auto: Vice City** PS2 (Also On: None) 10, 10, 10 **Platinum**
 ■ As if you don't already know why this game received our highest award
- High Heat Baseball 2004** PS2 (Also On: XB, GC) 9.0 **Gold**
 ■ The most realistic baseball sim on the market—period
- Hilzom 2** PS2 (Also On: XB, GC) 9.0 **Gold**
 ■ With elements from *AGS* and *Ator Payne*, *Hilzom 2* is, quite simply, a hit
- The House of the Dead II** XB (Also On: None) 7.5, 7.0, 7.0
 ■ Nothing new will shock you in this formulaic zombie shooter, but it's still solid fun
- Ikaruga** GC (Also On: None) 8.5, 8.0, 8.0 **Silver**
 ■ One incredibly inventive, wickedly addictive shooter
- Indiana Jones & the Emperor's Tomb** XB (Also On: PS2) 5.5, 4.5, 8.5
 ■ Looks like *Mr. Croft* has some competition riding tombs
- Legends of Wrestling II** GC (Also On: PS2, XB) 7.0, 6.0, 5.0
 ■ More like local-access television than *WrestleMania*'s glamorous theatrics
- Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker** GC (Also On: None) 9.5, 9.0, 1.0 **Gold**
 ■ GC owners can't go wrong with *Zelda*'s gorgeous cartoon visuals and classic gameplay
- Magic Pengo: The Quest for Color** PS2 (Also On: None) 7.5, 8.0, 7.5
 ■ Homocidal monsters add color to mundane battles
- Medal of Honor: Frontline** GC (Also On: PS2, XB) 7.0
 ■ The last great war makes for a great old time—especially with multiplayer
- MLB Slugfest 20-04** PS2 (Also On: XB, GC) 8.0, 7.0, 6.5
 ■ Tons of multiplayer fun, but don't expect the depth of a baseball sim
- Midnight Club II** PS2 (Also On: XB) 9.0, 8.0, 9.5 **Silver**
 ■ As unreloading sense of speed and total disregard for realistic physics
- NBA Street Vol. 2** PS2 (Also On: XB, GC) 9.5, 8.5, 8.5 **Silver**
 ■ A mix of both new- and old-school flows makes this baller a rockin' sequel
- Panzer Dragoon Orta** XB (Also On: None) 9.0, 8.5, 9.0 **Silver**
 ■ Most beautiful on-rails shooter imaginable, with a vast trove of amazing sounds

greatest hit or miss?

PS2, Xbox

MAX PAYNE

■ Publisher: Rockstar
 ■ Developer: Remedy
 ■ Originally Released: December 2005



Original Scores: 8.4, 7.6, 8.5 (Xbox); 7.5 (PS2)

If you can stomach its ultra-chosen film noir story line, you'll find that *Max Payne* tops a plucky action yarn—the Able-style bullet-time effects, stylized graphics, and intense challenges kept gamers enthralled for the long haul. Pick this up before its dumbed-down-but-with-a-dog imitation, *Dead to Rights*.

Fokkman Ruby and Sapphire GBA (Also On: None) 7.5, 6.5, 7.5
 ■ Pikachu and pals are back, but precious little has improved since *Gold/Silver*

Primal PS2 (Also On: None) 6.5, 6.5, 6.0
 ■ A beautiful, interesting adventure kinda compensates for oomp combat

Shinobi PS2 (Also On: None) 7.5, 7.5, 7.0
 ■ Sick bosses and perfect control thrill, but the extreme difficulty cuts like a 3-foot Gisu

The Sims PS2 (Also On: XB, GC) 9.5, 8.5, 8.0 **Silver**
 ■ Virtual soap-opera teens with innovation and freedom

Skies of Arcadia Legends GC (Also On: None) 9.0, 9.5, 9.0 **Gold**
 ■ This phenomenal skyfaring quest is the GC's role-playing savior

Star Wars: The Clone Wars XB (Also On: PS2, GC) 7.0, 7.0, 6.5
 ■ Online support puts this prettier version a few paces beyond its PS2 and GBA cousins

Tao Feng: Fist of the Lotus XB (Also On: None) 4.0, 6.0, 3.5
 ■ Ineffective blocking and generic characters do not a quality fighter make

Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven PS2 (Also On: None) 7.5, 7.0, 7.0
 ■ Ninja's rock, but somehow a lackluster story and horribly stupid AI snook it

Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon XB (Also On: PS2, GC) 8.0, 7.5, 8.0
 ■ Team-based online squad combat and Xbox Live's first nearby killer app

Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell GC (Also On: PS2, Xbox) 8.5, 9.5, 9.0 **Gold**
 ■ The GBA radar is a nice addition, but Sam Fisher isn't as pretty on the purple purse

War of the Monsters PS2 (Also On: None) 9.5, 6.0, 7.0
 ■ Manages to make the woefully underrepresented monster genre fun

World Series Baseball 2K3 XB (Also On: PS2) 6.0, 6.0, 6.0 **Silver**
 ■ WSB stands out with countless customization options and first-rate player models

World Soccer Winning Eleven 6 Int'l. PS2 (Also On: None) 9.0 **Gold**
 ■ Can this natural-feeling soccer sim take 2003 Sports Game of the Year?



Xenosaga: Episode 1
 PS2 (Also On: None)
 8.0, 8.0, 6.5
 ■ You don't so much play this RPG as watch its loopy plot unfold in hours of cut-scenes

Zone of the Enders: The 2nd Runner
 PS2 (Also On: None)
 7.5, 9.0, 8.5 **Silver**
 ■ Eye-popping pandemonium with a hairy-balled hero—no winners this time

■ *Skies of Arcadia Legends*—the best GC RPG

10 GAMES YOU MUST FINISH THIS SUMMER



It's an irony, really—it's simply a PC wonder your way into the PS2. Now it's your choice to catch up on the top-rated original: you've been meaning to read for months.

1 Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance 9.5, 9.5, 9.5 **Gold**
 PS2 (Also On: XB)
 You know MGS creator Hideo Kojima has eccentric opinions when he decided to pull Solid Snake from the spotlight

2 Final Fantasy X 9.0, 9.5, 9.5 **Gold**
 PS2
 (Discover how Yuna survived the Breast of Sin [and found love in the process] before she takes center stage in FFX-2)

3 Silent Hill 2 8.5, 7.5, 9.0 **Silver**
 PS2 (Also On: XB)
 SH2's snapshot of an unraveling mind is quite disturbing, and it also features some damn impressive fog

4 Pikmin 8.0, 10.0, 8.5 **Silver**
 GC
 What could Nintendo's maturing Shigeru Miyamoto possibly be growing in his garden that inspires a game like this?

5 Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers 8.5, 8.0, 8.0 **Silver**
 PS2 (Also On: XB, GC)
 This precious movie-based beat-'em-up goes beyond random button jacking/murdering

6 SOCOM: U.S. Navy Seals 9.0, 9.5, 9.5 **Gold**
 PS2
 Barking orders at your nunskaill partner Boomer is all right, but the real action's online

7 Ratchet & Clank 8.0, 8.0, 9.0 **Silver**
 PS2
 Ratchet and his robot sidekick wield goddamn weapons in this fun action-platformer

8 Halo 10, 10, 10 **Platinum**
 XB
 Solidly smart A.A., splendid scripting and unbreakable multiplayer set the standard for first-person shooting

9 Grand Turismo 3 A-Spec 10, 10, 10 **Platinum**
 PS2
 Self-respecting speed fiends know this consummate racing sim leaves no belt unfastened

10 Super Mario Advance 2 9.0, 9.0, 9.0 **Gold**
 GBA
 Replay the platforming masterpiece that started your SNES cartridge collection

tricks of the trade

strategies, codes, cheats, and other ways to run your games

trickster



Killing Nazis? Great! Killing robots with embedded killing guns? Even better. Hence the excess of Return to Castle Wolfenstein. Need some help playing Wolf on Xbox Live? I'm your new drill sergeant, maggots! Just don't freak out in the middle of the night and shoot me with rifle named Charlton, m'kay?

—David S. J. Hodgson
trickster@fflovis.com

■ Xbox

RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN

Get online and get killing. But how? If you remember nothing else, remember this: Play as a member of the team, not as an individual. This means, for starters, don't kill your teammates. That's not fun for anyone. You might think you're having fun, but actually, you're being a jerk. Common mistake. The four character classes in the multiplayer game are designed to complement one another, and a winning team plays coarily.

New to multiplayer? Here are some simple tricks that'll make you an asset to your team from the get-go. If you're on defense, arm yourself with the Weap and hide out in an objective room. Showlessly creep near the doorways or the radio that the opposing team needs. When any member of the other team shows up on your turf, promptly serve 'em a lead salad. If you're a rookie on offense, try being a Medic. Follow your more knowledgeable teammates and provide support until you learn your way around the battlefield.

Once you have your bearings, it's time to specialize. Try each class to see what suits you. Whichever you choose, use your special abilities to help your team attain victory. Here's how.

old-school fools

Our interactive about de-lectricizing the ladies of 2014: *Xbox One's* *Beach Volleyball* earned us some extreme ill will. Well, some of our readers sure can hold a grudge. With death threats still coming in, we wondered how our latest torturology, ehem, stacks up to EDM tricks of yesteryear. Get it? Stacks? Never mind. Which was your favorite EDM April Fool's trick?

9% The Misspelling at "Street of Kings" Nihilous!

21% Wearing "GameShunter" pants.

21% Belmont appears in "Average Adult's Ninja Turtle."

47% I hate them and you equally.

Source: *Electronic Gaming Monthly*, April 2014

TRICKS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PRIMA GAMES

These strategies for *Wolfenstein: The Old Blood* and *NBA Street Vol. 2* were hand-picked from a boundless crop of seasonal strategy guide fruit. For more succulent and nutritious bits, look for *Prima* flavor anywhere games are sold.



■ Yes. Just sneaking around, guarding the radio room, et cetera. Talking to myself.

Soldier

A specialist in all types of armament, the Soldier can choose any weapon. He should always be in the thick of the fray, covering a strategic location or defending a crucial objective. In addition to wielding weapons the other classes cannot use, the Soldier starts with the most ammunition (except for grenades). Because he constantly engages the enemy, however, his ammo supply and health need regular replenishing. Back him up with a Medic and a Lieutenant. The following strategies make the Soldier even more effective.

Aim for the head. One or two headshots are worth half a clip of body shots.

Get for ammo and health. Press Left on the D-pad for medical assistance. Right to plead for ammo from the Lieutenant.

Cover objectives. Soldiers pack a lot more heat than other classes. Use it for important jobs, like guarding or assaulting team objectives.

Seize. Use the Moxer to assist team members from a distance by picking off the enemy. Remember, aim for the head.

Protect Engineers. As a Soldier it is your job to keep the Engineer alive while he tries to complete demolition objectives. If you're outnumbered while on escort duty, go ahead and bite off more than you can chew. Spread your fire around. Get the enemies' attention and earn your teammate valuable time. It's better for your team if you're executed by three enemies while your Engineer succeeds than if you take out two opponents while the third kills your Engineer before his work is done. Take one for the team.

Engineer

A specialist in explosives, the Engineer breaches fortified locations and destroys objectives. He can defuse the enemy's explosives before they go off, negating the resources and time they spent planting them. The Engineer can also repair broken stationary guns. And his heavy grenades are perfect for clearing out a room or



■ That's right, dude, headshots are much more effective than firing at Jock's heels.



destroying a gun emplacement. By now, it should be clear that the Engineer is often the pivotal figure in a battle's outcome. The wise Engineer doesn't behave like a Soldier, he conserves his ammo for necessary self defense and concentrates on doing his job.

Blow things up. The Engineer sets explosives to open a path for his team or to destroy an objective. The red dots on your compass lead you to obstacles or objectives you can destroy. The larger the dots grow, the closer you are.

Plant dynamite, which glows yellow, needs to be armed before it can do its work. Use the pliers on planted dynamite until the blue progress bar is full. While the dynamite is armed, it glows red.

If you complete your demolition duty, switch to grenades and destroy camping enemies and enemy-held NDGs.

Repair stationary guns. Only an Engineer can repair a destroyed MG42. To fix the broken weapon, use the pliers as you would to arm dynamite. Be sure to tell your team that the gun is up and running again. They might not notice your handwork in the heat of battle.

guns. lots of guns

This chart shows each class' starting ammunition with all available weapons. (Note that the Colt and Thompson are Allied weapons. The Luger and MP40 are their respective Axis counterparts. Note further that Axis grenades have stupid-looking wooden handles. They still blow up real good, though.)

Weapon	SOLDIER	ENGINEER	MEDIC	LEUTENANT
Colt	32	32	32	32
Luger	32	32	32	32
Grenades	4	8	2	1
MP40	96	64	32	64
Thompson	90	60	30	60
Shotgun	30	-	-	64
Mauser	20	-	-	-
Shotgun	30	-	-	-
Parzerfaust	4	-	-	-
Venom	500	-	-	-
Flamethrower	200	-	-	-



Everything will be OK now that Dr. Frodo is here. He'll make the pain go away.

Medic

He holds the wounded and revives the fallen. When a Medic spawns, all his teammates gain an additional 10 Health Points. He carries little ammunition and has no choice in primary weapons.

Be in mind the old adage, "Discretion is the better part of valor." Running from battle serves the Medic well, because he heals himself over time and has the highest health limit. The Medic can help his teammates attack the enemy, but he should not do so alone. Mostly, he should spend his time fixing wounded or incapacitated teammates. An adept Medic can make sure his team is always fighting, leaving little time for the opposing force to catch its breath.

Help the wounded. Give medkits to teammates in need. Dispensing first aid kits depletes your power, which regenerates over time. When you're temporarily unable to drop first aid kits, simply wait until your power bar refills, then continue the healing! A full power bar yields four first aid kits.

When a teammate calls for a Medic, an icon appears over his head. If you are far away, follow the icon on your compass to locate him. The closer you are, the bigger the icon grows. When you find him, patch him up pronto. If no one else needs immediate attention, escort a Soldier or two and help them fight rather than wandering aimlessly or hanging back waiting to be called. Be proactive. Just because you're a healer doesn't mean you can't dispense a little pain.

Revive the fallen. Look for incapacitated men reaching for the sky and screaming for you. They need your attention. To revive a fallen man, pull out a syringe and give him a shot. You have only 10 syringes, so use them carefully, according to your team's needs.

Lieutenant

The Lieutenant is like a scaled-back Soldier with some crucial special abilities. He can call in massive air strikes to destroy barnes or clear out a group of hostile soldiers. Less flashy but perhaps more important, the Lieutenant provides his teammates with extra ammunition. He can use his binoculars to gather intel about troop movements and warn his

squad of imminent danger.

He shouldn't charge in on the front lines like a Soldier, but neither should he be too far away from the action, where his ability to call in air strikes and distribute ammo are near-worthless. Try pairing the Lieutenant with a Medic so he can use his combat skills to inflict damage and never wait for health.

Distribute ammunition. Drop ammo packs at the feet of team members in need. If you run out, just wait a while to recoup your power. A full power bar yields four ammo packs.

When a teammate calls for ammo, an icon appears over his head. If you are far away, follow the icon on your compass to locate him. The closer you are, the bigger the icon grows. (Sound familiar?)

Don't get unnecessarily sidetracked by firefights; remember your role on the team. It's better to distribute ammo and have multiple effective combatants than for you to play Rambo while your team is trying to fight with pistols and knives.

Bomb 'em. Pick a spot ripe for an air strike and plant a smoke canister there. Smoke will strike a large area surrounding the smoke. Bombs fall straight down toward your marker, so air strikes won't be effective under overhangs or strikes. And obviously, you cannot use this ability indoors. You need 50 percent of your power bar to call for an air strike.

Try calling in a strike before exposing snipers, who can't see past the view of their scopes and won't notice the signal smoke before the bombardment sends them to hell—uh, that is, to the reinforcements queue. This trick works on outdoor NDG2 emplacements, too.



PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

NBA STREET VOL. 2

It's tempting to try for the biggest, plattest moves all the time, but a clever player will take advantage of your misplaced zeal and beat you to 21 faster than you can say "Kareem Abdul-Jabbar." These tips will steer you right. Listen up.

Offense

To maximize the best drop of talent from your boys, study the players' ratings and make sure you're putting them in the right position. Don't by stomping over Shaquille O'Neal with Steve Nash, and don't bust out tricky dribbles with Yao Ming. Simple enough. When you've got the hang of these fundamentals and you're ready to advance your game, try the following pep-and-charge strategies.

Get to the basket. When you're rushing the lane looking to make something happen, there's nothing worse than seeing seven feet of defender at your feet (unless it's not seeing the seven feet of defender in your way). When it looks like your dunk will be blocked, make a mid-air transition to a layup. Start a dunk, and when the defender goes up for the block, tap Shoot again. Your player will dip-and-go and gorty left the ball into for two.

Handle the situation. Take on the big men with your team's top handle. Trick into their bodies to knock 'em down. Big guys don't usually have a high flexion or Steals ratings, so they won't be picking your pocket. Once you have them in the dirt, you'll have a clear path to the hoop and possibly an easy-up opportunity.



Use the pump fake. Tap Shoot quickly to perform a pump. If they don't bite, pass. Even better, hit two Turbo and Pass to perform an Off-Go Heazy, bouncing the ball off your opponent's dome. Use a combination of pump fakes and passes to move the ball around and keep the defense off balance.

Work the whole court. Draw the opposing team's best defender away from the hoop by swinging the ball to the weak



With your team's best hander, back a defender on his side by tricking into him.

side of the court. Setting picks is another good way to deal with lane congestion.

Mix up your timing. Try running past a defender and then doubling back with a trick. This can throw the defender off and earn you some easy Trick Points. If you're facing someone who's really good at Trick Counters, get used to interrupting your moves. Tap Pass during the animation to cancel your trick in order to steal the steal.

Don't get too leazy in the lane. Even if you knock one defender down, there's probably another nearby ready to counter your scoring attempt.

Control the ball. When rebounding, you'll have an advantage if you box out. Wedge your player between an opponent and the hoop before you go up. This way, you have a better chance of sidestepping your missed shot. (Tap Shoot and hold Turbo for the top-shot.) At the jump ball, don't mash buttons. Stay calm and tap Shoot once before the ball reaches its peak. Practice your timing.

Defense

Even when you're trailing, don't lose heart. If there's any game in which a come-from-behind victory is possible, it's this one. Tightening up your D can make all the difference because it will lower your opponent's morale. Use these handy techniques to ruin in a glowing winner and get back in the game.

Own the goal. In streetball, blocking every shot is fair and square—they don't call goaltending. So sure you have a tall player near the rim at all times, as super blocking is a sure way to frustrate any opponent. To deny a shot with authority, hit Shoot/Rebound while holding Turbo and jumping into the ball's path. It sounds easy, but to block consistently, you'll have

half-court pass and beat break, practice jumping in the path of the ball for the steal. Or send his rebound passes: As your opponent is about to rebound, dart toward the receiving player. Tap Steal just as the opponent begins his ball-catching animation. Time it right and you'll woot the rock from your opponent just when he's crossing a flashy dunk. Sweet.

Always play tenacious D. Don't give up on the play. It's difficult, but we've seen a baller come from behind the play and block the shot. Get ready to counter as what it's all about. Challenge every shot. Simply having a player in your opponent's face as he shoots significantly reduces the shot's scoring chance. Try to have at least one player in your lineup with a top Blocks rating and another with a high Steals rating. This way, you'll put pressure on the offense anywhere on the court.

Be tricky, not tricked. Don't bust out Trick Counters willy-nilly. Wait and watch to make sure the offensive player has started doing an advanced trick, then

make your move. Your opponent will be much less willing to commit, and you'll have a better chance at the Counter. Plus it's a better punch-out to counter an advanced trick.

to keep a watchful eye on your turbo meter and court position.

Lean to lag. As the offense approaches, don't be too eager to "man up," since it makes you vulnerable to knockdown tricks. Keep a fair distance from your man and you see an advanced trick move, then Tap Turbo and Steal for a Trick Counter. The other benefit of keeping your distance is that if a shot goes up, you'll have time to fade back and attempt a block. If you're really tight on a man and he gets a shot off, you'll have to switch defenders and hope someone's close enough to try for the block.

Don't fall for pump fakes.

If an open player manages a three-point shot, you should have less to block it. Most shots will be dunks or short-range attempts that you can react or alter. Falling for pump fakes adds to the other team's Gamebreaker meter. Don't be a chump.

Watch the clock. Pay attention to the shot clock. Look for rushed scoring attempts as time ticks away. While the seconds remain, tighten the defensive screws. At three or less, be up on your man and ready to catch the shot right off his fingertips.

Practice blowby. If your opponent is fast of the



■ Game Boy Advance

YU-GI-OH! WORLDWIDE EDITION

Knowing the rules of the Duel hardly guarantees victory. The best Duelists have the game half won before they step onto the field. They spend hours building their decks, carefully adding and subtracting cards according to a focused strategy. They're rather clever (and scary) individuals, and we're here to turn you into one of them by showing you the best cards in the game. But remember—don't include these "best" cards if they don't support your deck's strategy.

Best Attack Monsters

Card	ATK
Goblin Attack Force	2,300
Zanbys the Dark	2,100
Dark Elf	2,000
Feather Warrior	2,000
Gemini Elf	1,900
Slate Warrior	1,900
Vorse Raider	1,900
Mechanicalchaser	1,800
7 Colored Fish	1,800
Battle Stool	1,800
Bistro Butcher	1,800
Quasmos Dark Witch	1,800
Georfinn the Iron Knight	1,800
Guard Red Seesaw	1,800
Harpe's Brother	1,800
La Jinn the Mystical Genie	1,800
Copy Cat	0

Best Defense Monsters

Card	DEF
Aqua Medoer	2,000
Barzaph of the Light	2,000
Guard Soldier of Stone	2,000
Hummold Slime	2,000
Mystical Elf	2,000
Prevent Rat	2,000
Spirit of the Harp	2,000
The Forging Machine	2,000
Copy Cat	0

Self-Limited Cards

Backup Soldier
Graciful Charity
Morphing Jar #2
Noblemen of Crossed Sabres

Limited Cards

Bill of Destruction
Call of the Haunted
Card Destruction

Ceasefire

Change of Heart
Confiscation
Cyber Jar
Dark Hole

Delinquent Duo

Exotic the Forbidden One
Hurpin's Feather Duster
Heavy Storm
Imperial Order
Jinx

Left Arm of the Forbidden One

Left Leg of the Forbidden One

Linxer Removal

Magic Power

Magic Cylinder

Mixor Force

Monster Reborn

Morphing Jar

Painful Choice

Pot of Greed

Premature Burial

Raidgo

Right Arm of the Forbidden One

Right Leg of the Forbidden One

Slate Warrior

Stretch Spell

Swords of Revealing Light

The Forceful Santry

United We Stand

Upstart Goblin

Witch of the Black Forest

Best Fusion Monsters

Beastking of the Serapes

Cyber-Slain

Fusion Sage

Godess with the Third Eye

Monster Eye

Mystical Sheep #1

Magest of Faith

Polymerization

Best Magic and Trap Cards

Monster Destruction

Card Destruction

Damage Prevention

Magic and Trap Prevention

Best ATK for Level 5-6 Monsters

Amphibian Beast

Cyber-Tech Alkigator

Jinx

Starsovereign Skull

Best DEF for Level 5-6 Monsters

Boast of Gilder

Boastful Tortoise

Incubated Fearless Mage

Labyrinth Wall

Millennium Gates

Millennium Shield

Total Defense Shogun

Best ATK for Level 7+ Monsters

Blue-Eyes White Dragon

Caeno Queen

Tri-Horned Dragon

Sanganjin

Wapeweaver

Best Fusion Monsters

Blue-Eyes Ultimate Dragon

Gale Guardan

Motzer B. Dragon

B. Skull Dragon

St. Joan



Best 7+ Star Monsters for Defense
Noblymon the Magna Warrior
Hyouenryu

Cards Allowing Special Summons
Elegant Egoist
Giant Rat
Seagun
Witch of the Black Forest

Cards that Prevent Monster Attacks
Nightmare's Steedage
Swords of Revealing Light

Cards that Negate Damage
Kariob
Magic Cylinder
Tornado Wall
Wakube

Traps that Stop Monsters
Gravity Bind
Shadow Spell
Spinning Circle

Cards that Neutralize or Destroy Individual Monsters
Acid Trap Hole
Bill of Destruction
Crush Card
Haze-Haze
Man-Eater Bug
Mickizuro

Noblemen of Crossed
Penguin Soldier
Solomon Judgement
Trap Hole
Tribute to The Doomed Jk.

Vazhar
by Full Sail Student
Brian German



FULL SAIL
Real World Education

School of:
Game Design
Computer Animation
Digital Media
Film
Audio
Show Production

800.226.7625
www.fullsail.com

3300 University Boulevard
Winter Park, FL 32792

- Financial aid available to those who qualify.
- Job placement assistance.
- Accredited by ACCSCT.

©2001 Full Sail, Inc. All rights reserved. The terms "Full Sail," "Full Sail Real World Education," and the Full Sail logo are either registered service marks or service marks of Full Sail, Inc.

THE REST OF THE CRAP

Seanbaby suffers so you won't have to

sound off



MY JOB SUCKS

There are times during everyone's career when they think they might have chosen the wrong line of work. For example, when a tagitive wearing a wet suit and night-vision goggles is hiding in the bottom of an offshore, some poor police officer has to drag him out of there and arrest him. One day that cop and his talking dog were kung-fu-ing cocaine smugglers, and the next day fate spits on his head from his kick-ass flying fate motorcycle. But know this: Every time a cop handcuffs a man covered in redneck excrement, he radios in, "Dispatch, this is toilet patrol. At least I didn't have to review a game about Piglet. Over!"

—Seanbaby

PlayStation 2 PIGLET'S BIG MOVIE GAME



Over their up

Publisher: Gollum Games
ESRB: Everyone

This is a tough game to judge—it's clearly made for people too young to distinguish between it and food. It's so infantile that players will receive a notification from the Academy for their brave portrayals of stunted characters. At one point, my pitiable pig had to rescue Pooh from a pile of sticky caramel he sat on. To give you an idea of the intellectual journey this sort of Piglet's brain on Pooh suggested I use a

stick. Four inches away, the only item on the screen just happened to be a giant glowing stick. But I was not about to let a piglet! I'm controlling this advice from someone who lost a life-and-death battle of wits to an ice-cream topping.

Drawing upon my vast knowledge of adventure-game logic puzzles, I knew Pooh's best chance was for Piglet to infect him with exotic sea warts that secrete caramel solvent. I'm embarrassed to admit I couldn't access the combination of zoms to trigger that reaction, but I'm more embarrassed to admit that I let out an audible "boomy!" after I discovered that when you kick the giant cupcakes, they launch cookies!

Bottom Line: Even mentally impaired players may find this game lacking in complexity and challenge.



PlayStation THE THREE STOOGES

Publisher: Metro 3D
ESRB: Everyone

This is an exact port of a Game Boy Advance game ported from an old NES game based on a TV show that won't off the air before half of the current world's population was born. It would have saved everyone some time if the game came packaged with a garbage can already built around it. Your goal is to prevent the lunacy of Mr's Dylhooze by forcing the Stooges into menial jobs, none of which manages to generate more fun than filling out a real-life job application.

There are a few positions where you get to exploit the Stooges' penchant for slapstick violence, like when they, for reasons we can't possibly understand, are hired by a restaurant to throw pies at customers. The game quickly takes a turn for the tragic, though, when they're hired as orderlies. At that job, you knock dirty people off their stretchers during a high-speed dash through a hospital. Lack the philosophical background to judge whether sea orphans is worth the cost of hundreds of sick people tapping to their deaths in a hallway, but I do know that if the only people interested in saving an orphanage are three kankles stopping

each other in the face, they probably shouldn't be raising children.

Bottom Line: Playing this game could conceivably improve your ability to enjoy any form of entertainment.

PlayStation GRATZ



Publisher: Ubi Soft
ESRB: Everyone

Videogames can make our wildest dreams come to fruition. And I guess enough people have listed "tapping my thumb against things" as a personal dream in market-research polls, "cause someone releases a horrible rhythmic-dancing game every seven hours.

You'll find that Gratz has worse music than most, but there's good news: The game's stazy voice is so busy congratulating or mocking your ability to tap the controller correctly, you usually can't hear the music. It is a matter of seconds, it builds you up from "Good!" to "Amazing!" to "Four thumb bounces my wildest erotic tapping fantasies!" and then after one week, it hits you with, "Oh, I don't think so!" Tease. Plus, check out the style! Gratz "girls" behave—sexualizing young girls has never been this scary.

Bottom Line: No, really, this is the worst hitless-tapping simulation yet. This time I mean it. I swear.



classic trap

ALP

In a frat-stic clash of phenomenal groupy fiction, the 8-bit Super Mister System game, if managed to disappear even 30% more. Which, according to med. res. studies, should have been inevitable.



Game Boy Advance THE MUPPETS: ON WITH THE SHOW!

Publisher: TDK Mediasize
ESRB: Everyone

The Muppet Show delivered comedy skills, musical numbers, and Hollywood's hottest guest stars with the promise that at least once every episode, Gonzo would hint that he was about to have sex with a chicken. And though singing puppets managed to make alien-on-chicken bestiality palatable enough for children's programming, nothing could save this videogame.

Putting The Muppets On With the Show! into your GBA is like taking yourself prisoner to your own portable torture camp. And like all good forms of torture, it doesn't confine itself to just one type of indefinable pain. There are several different misprisons, most of which require you to dodge slowly moving objects for 30 or 40 seconds. This is only challenging because the full measurability you control into little or no interest in the directional commands you input. Still, if you manage to get to the store, buy this game, and get back to your car without running into any more than 13 or 14 walls, playing On With the Show! will probably be an insult to your neural skills.

Bottom Line: I'd rather watch the two old Muppet dudes in the balcony make out than play this. **A-**



CROSSWORD: CASTLEVANIA

(Continued on page 120)



ACROSS

- Death's usual bloodline
- Tony Hawk rail side
- One who is scarier of Castlevania's (NES) fifth boss?
- Three strikes in All-Star Baseball
- Game-to-TV freq. modulator
- Lisa NES's Bypass
- Home to the CD convention
- You have to change it in *Gun Taurus*
- Increases with your experience in *Phantasy Star Online*
- Romance's main...Man
- Obnoxious Castlevania foe
- You find one behind the observatory's star chart in *Shadowgate* (NES)
- Extremely self-worship gamer?
- Source of sidarm
- What the son will do to break a curse in *Siren's Quest*
- World Soccer Diamond League, for short
- Tiger Woods Golf association
- Used to play Dance Dance Revolution
- From Software PS2 title, for short
- Sony's new (and Working Designs' former) RPG star
- Like arcade's ST
- May look behind you in a horror game
- Xbox team-based shooter, for short
- A record of game data
- Proof of game purchase
- Use the gun right in a first-person shooter
- When fees are weaker in *Siren's Quest*
- Just...Ralph's future
- Like Barbaro's skin in *Unlucky* (DC)
- Madison otherwise position, for short
- Jim White PlayStation PS_
- Hsu & Chan surname
- Like Dexter of J&K and Dante, or the title of a now-defunct girl's magazine
- Dracula's son

DOWN

- One of three keys to the Enchanted Stadium in *Eternal Darkness*
- Just Drive...Mars
- Little Punch-Out! (NES) protagonist
- Xbox Live chat method
- When Xbox ends?
- Faught Dracula in *Castlevania II*
- Early Jaleco soccer game for NES
- Double-tap the D-pad to do it in *Symphony of the Night*
- Came from the Desert in a TurboGrafx-16 CD game
- Alizard's father
- King, to a French Takken player
- Kit that heels in *Half-Life*
- Ms. Graft
- Video game music pattern
- GBA's...yo Pop
- Wields Dekamer
- Climb these in *Castlevania* clock towers
- Music item in *Zelda*, *Dracle of Ages*
- Place to replenish health in *River City Ransom* (NES)
- Arguably the most annoying Castlevania's buddies
- Evil...or Red...Revolver
- Used to climb in *Ninjabo*
- Alvaro's main date
- Zelda's "roar" and Alvaro's "pus"
- Phantasy Star* ice spell
- Lap Twin or Down
- Magdal's weak point in *Zelda WW*
- What allies do to your commands in *Klonoa*
- The Start button usually brings one up midgame
- Converts video and audio signals in CD-based consoles (abbrv.)
- Also game featuring robotic Starters, for short
- Mr. Mosquito's Japanese alias

MATRIX CONTEST:
ROUND TWO

Enter the Matrix...and win lots of cool stuff!



Are you The One? In celebration of the Matrix movies and game, *Computer Gaming World* and *Electronic Gaming Monthly*, in coordination with our sponsors—*Mitras of America*, Sony Computer Entertainment America, Infogramme, and Warner Home Video—challenge you to follow the white rabbit through our magazine this month and uncover the truth! Just find all five (5) rabbits hidden on the pages of each magazine and submit your answers at <http://gamers.com/features/matrix/>. All correct entries will be entered in a random drawing for a chance to win one of the following great prizes:

Grand Prizes (We're giving away five (5) of each!)

Sony PlayStation 2
Nintendo GameCube
Microsoft Xbox

First Prizes
(10 for each platform!)

Infogramme's Enter the Matrix game for PC, PlayStation 2, GameCube, and Xbox

Second Prizes

36 Aviator DVDs
20 The Matrix Special Edition DVDs
10 The Matrix DVDs (regular version)

Runners-Up Prizes

20 one-year subscriptions to *Computer Gaming World*
20 one-year subscriptions to *Electronic Gaming Monthly*

HOW TO PLAY

CGW and EGM will each have five (5) white rabbits hidden on five (5) different pages of our July issues. To enter, you need to:

- Find the five (5) pages with white rabbits in EGM
 - Find the five (5) pages with white rabbits in CGW
 - Log on to the contest page at <http://gamers.com/features/matrix/>
 - Enter the five (5) white-rabbit page numbers for CGW in sequential order from lowest to highest
 - Enter the five (5) white-rabbit page numbers for EGM in sequential order from lowest to highest
- All correct entries received by July 1, 2003, will then be entered into a drawing for the prizes. Only one entry per person is accepted.

And, oh yeah, the rabbit on this page that you're looking at right now? It counts! It's a rabbit. (But don't count any you see on the cover or polybag.) Now go find the four (4) others...and good luck!

Full legal rules available at <http://gamers.com/features/matrix/>.



THE ESRB VIDEO & COMPUTER GAME RATINGS

Find out whether a
computer or video game
is right for your home.

Learn more about the Entertainment Software
Review Board rating system and how games
get rated on www.esrb.org.



EARLY CHILDHOOD

Titles rated "Early Childhood (EC)" have content that may be suitable for children ages three and older and do not contain any material that parents would find inappropriate.



EVERYONE

Titles rated "Everyone (E)" have content that may be suitable for persons ages six and older. These titles will appeal to people of many ages and tastes. They may contain minimal violence, some comic mischief (for example, slapstick comedy), or some crude language.



TEEN

Titles rated "Teen (T)" have content that may be suitable for persons ages 13 and older. Titles in this category may contain violent content, mild or strong language, and/or suggestive themes.



MATURE

Titles rated "Mature (M)" have content that may be suitable for persons ages 17 and older. These products may include more intense violence or language than products in the Teen category. In addition, these titles may also include mature sexual themes.



ADULTS ONLY

Titles rated "Adults Only (AO)" have content suitable only for adults. These products may include graphic depictions of sex and/or violence. Adults Only products are not intended to be sold or rented to persons under the age of 18.



RATING PENDING

Product has been submitted to the ESRB and is awaiting final rating.

This message is brought to you by the Editors of:

 ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA
GAME GROUP

 ELECTRONIC
GAMING
MONTHLY

 PlayStation

 OFFICIAL
GAMING
SITE

 GAMENOW

 XBN

 POCKET
GAMES

 GAMINGZONE



Hsu and Chan
 CASE
'SYMPHONY
 OF THE NIGHT

COMPANIES OF THE NIGHT
 ARE BEING
 THEIR TIME

HEY! UP, HELLO, WOOD GAMING
 THE ONLY MARIANA THAT'S ANY
 INTERESTING, CHAN, AND WE WERE
 BEHIND THE SCENAS, LIVING IN THE
 TO GET, BUT THE TERRIBLE
 HONORABLE HAS TROUBLE GETTING OUT ON
 LEAVING US STRANDED IN THE
 MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

THAT TEACHER
 SHALL NOT GO
 UNPUNISHED!

'YOU'RE GETTING A SET OF
 FREAKISHES!'

'YOU
 METER
 ME!'

WELL, I SURE
 KNOW'S BETTER
 TO BE SET TO
 FIND A POWER

SAY WHY DON'T
 WE TRY THAT BIG
 OLD HOUSE ON
 THE HILL?

BECAUSE WE ARE
 NEARBY INCREASED
 SLIP TO HAVE REASONS
 YOU'RE SLEEPING

COME ON, I SAW
 A HORRIBLE HOUSE
 A LITTLE WAY BACK
 BEHIND THE HILL

LET'S
 GO
 BACK
 TO
 CHECK
 OUT
 THAT
 HOUSE

NOW WE'RE TOGETHER!
 LEAVING BEHIND A
 MOUNTAIN OF
 STRESS!!!

I GOT
 THE SAME
 FEELING
 GOALS

WELL, THAT'S
 GREAT!
YARG!

POW!
POW!
 NIGHT
 ON!
 POW!

GASP...
 THAT...
 WHERE...

GOOD WORK,
 FRIENDS!
 YOUR BEST
 EFFORTS
 WERE
 WORTH
 THE
 WAIT!

'HONK!
 YOU
 WAS
 ABOUT...
 DEPART...'

LET'S
 GO
 HOME
 NOW

DOES
 THAT
 MEAN
 WE
 CAN
 FINALLY
 TRAVEL?

LET'S
 GO!
 TO
 THE
 HILL!

JUST
 MIND
 YOUR
 FEELINGS
 IN
 THE
 DARK

LET'S
 GO!

LET'S
 GO!

LET'S
 GO!

LET'S
 GO!

LET'S
 GO!

LET'S
 GO!

LET'S
 GO!

OH, TAKE THAT,
 STUPID ABOUT THAT
 SKELETON IN A LITTLE
 ON THE EDGE, LATER!

SOON
 THERE'S
 ALL
 THE
 TIME
 WE'RE
 THE
 TALKING
 BUSINESS
 IN
 YOUR
 VEST

WE
 CAN
 GET
 SOMEONE
 TO
 HELP
 US!

BELONGING?
 YOU MEAN
 LIKE, OF THE
 BELONGING?

CRASHED
 TRUCK
 BUT NEAR
 CRASH
 LIFE!
 AND ALL THIS,
 WE SEEM
 TO
 HAVE
 FOUND
 THE
 LIFE!
 THE LIFE!
 THE LIFE!
 THE LIFE!
 THE LIFE!

I NEED A
 MORE
 "SOLUTION"
 SHE SAID!

I CAN'T
 TAKE
 MORE
 AND
 BROTHERS
 AND
 SISTERS
 AND
 LITTLE
 SLEEPING
 WIVES
 AND
 WITH
 THE
 WIFE'S
 BROTHER
 AND

WELL, I'M
 ABOUT
 TO
 BEAT
 THAT
 WHERE'S
 THE
 POINT?

CONSIDERING
 OVER
 QUANTITY
 THIS
 MAY
 NOT
 BE
 SUBSTANTIAL!

NEVER
 THE
 WEIGHT,
 NOT
 ME!
 I DON'T
 NEED
 THAT!

IS IT
 ABOUT
 THE
 WALL
 MEET?

SO, THE
 LANE

YOU WANT US
 TO COME BACK
 LATER, MARE?

COME HOME
 NOW!
 I GOT YOU A WHOLE
 HOUSE!

SO, THE
 LANE

YOU WANT US
 TO COME BACK
 LATER, MARE?

COME HOME
 NOW!
 I GOT YOU A WHOLE
 HOUSE!

COME HOME
 NOW!
 I GOT YOU A WHOLE
 HOUSE!

YOUR GREAT
 BUSINESS
 BOOMER
 DID THE
 STATE
 OF
 THE
 NIGHT
 THE
 FIRST
 GO
 TO
 THE
 OLD
 HOUSE
 AND
 BREAK
 YOUR
 FINGER
 WHERE'S
 LIFE!

YES!
 CHAN
 TO
 DESTINY!

ONE
 DESTINY
 LIFE!

WELL, THE
 THIRD
 CHASE
 OF
 THE
 NIGHT
 AND
 LOOK
 HOW
 I
 CAN
 BEAT
 YOUR
 SCARY!
 WHILE
 THE
 NIGHT
 THE
 NIGHT
 THE
 NIGHT
 THE
 NIGHT

WELL, THE
 THIRD
 CHASE
 OF
 THE
 NIGHT
 AND
 LOOK
 HOW
 I
 CAN
 BEAT
 YOUR
 SCARY!
 WHILE
 THE
 NIGHT
 THE
 NIGHT
 THE
 NIGHT
 THE
 NIGHT

WELL, THE
 THIRD
 CHASE
 OF
 THE
 NIGHT
 AND
 LOOK
 HOW
 I
 CAN
 BEAT
 YOUR
 SCARY!
 WHILE
 THE
 NIGHT
 THE
 NIGHT
 THE
 NIGHT
 THE
 NIGHT

ALL RIGHT,
 OFF THE
 HOUSE,
 MONEY IN
 DISCOUNT!
 YOUR
 COURSE
 IS
 SHOUTING!
 NAME
 WHERE'S
 THE
 POINT?

LET'S
 GO!
 TO
 THE
 HILL!

LET'S
 GO!
 TO
 THE
 HILL!

LET'S
 GO!
 TO
 THE
 HILL!

LET'S
 GO!
 TO
 THE
 HILL!

LET'S
 GO!
 TO
 THE
 HILL!

LET'S
 GO!
 TO
 THE
 HILL!

MEDABOTS

MORE MEDABOTS. MORE POWER.

ROKUSHO



AN RPG ADVENTURE

Kids everywhere are losing their prized Medabot Medals and Medaparts to a diabolical team of warped Medamaniacs! Join Ikki and his friends as they track down the source of the trouble and beat the Rubberbats at their own twisted game!



I should let Doko go to Advanced Private School, and I'll go after the Rubberbats!

All your favorite Medabots characters!



What action next?

A 30+ hour adventure!



Trade and Rubberbatle with friends!



NATSUME

Serious Fun™

www.natsume.com / www.medabots.com

Medabots is a registered trademark of Natsume Inc. Serious Fun is a trademark of Natsume Inc. © 2002-2003 Natsume Inc. All Rights Reserved. Character Design by Haruhiko. Medabots is a trademark of Natsume Inc. and is used under license. © 1993-1998 Engadget Co. 100-1150-0002 Natsume Co., Ltd. Published by Natsume Inc. Production Copyright © 2003 Engadget. Medabots © 1993-1998 Natsume Inc. All Rights Reserved. Medabots is a trademark of Natsume Inc. and is used under license. The Rubberbat is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

GAME BOY ADVANCE

A large, vibrant image of Sonic the Hedgehog wearing a red cape, standing in a futuristic, metallic environment. He is surrounded by various other Sonic characters and enemies, including Knuckles, Tails, and Dr. Eggman. The scene is filled with action and energy.

Total CHAOS



NEW electronic
Sonic games available
June 27th!

SONIC DX
ADVENTURE
Director's Cut™

ALL THE EPIC THRILLS • BONUS MINI-GAMES • NEW MISSION MODE



Violence



NINTENDO
GAMECUBE™

SEGA

SONIC
TEAM

SEGA is a registered trademark of SEGA CORPORATION. SEGA, the SEGA logo, Street Fighter and Street Fighter characters are either registered trademarks or trademarks of SEGA CORPORATION. Original Gamecube. ©2005 SEGA CORPORATION. All Rights Reserved. TM, ®, and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. The settings seen in a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. www.esrb.org
© 2005 Microsoft & Corporation. All participating Microsoft & Xbox support text.

RETROMAGS

Our goal is to preserve classic video game magazines so that they are not lost permanently.

People interested in helping out in any capacity, please visit us at www.retromags.com.

No profit is made from these scans, nor do we offer anything available from the publishers themselves.

If you come across anyone selling releases from this site, please do not support them and do let us know.

Thank you!

